

SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

NEW SERIES.

SEPTEMBER, 1885. VOL. XVII, No. 9.

After Vacation.

THE Sunday-school Assemblies, or summer schools, are all over now. Vacation has ended, and those who have enjoyed a short respite from ordinary toil are again in the harness, and at work. What have our Sunday-school teachers to show as the result of the summer vacation? What have they learned? What new inspiration have they received? What new vows have they formed?

There is an influence in new associations and new scenes, and in contact with fellow-workers, which ought not to be overlooked in measuring the power of a Sunday-school teacher. Some have visited other schools far away from home, and have learned the better how to conduct their own. They have perhaps discovered what some others have known for a long time—that the great cities are not monopolists of the best schools, though they may have the largest. There are quiet nooks in the country where may be found schools with the best of superintendents and teachers, and where the scholars are well-trained in the word of God. Others have gone to the great summer gatherings of Sunday-school teachers at Chautauqua, and similar places, and have obtained fresh inspiration from their novel experiences.

Our Sunday-schools all over the land ought to be better for these influences. Those who have stayed at home can learn from those who went away. There are teachers' meetings in which opportunity is afforded for the relation of what has been seen, and heard, and learned at the assemblies, or in other places during the summer vacation. The plan is a good one. Indeed, we think it would richly repay some schools to raise a purse, and send to Chautauqua some keen observer, with the understanding that he shall record his observations, and narrate them on his return to those who sent him. This has been done in some instances, and with great success.

Now, let us prepare for our fall and winter work, learning all we can, laboring all we can, and praying all we can for the blessing of the Great Teacher to rest on our efforts.

A New Start.

Now that we are at work again, a fresh down-pour of spiritual energy is needed. Are there wheels in motion? There must be a divine pressure on the wheels, a pentecost-power behind our activity. We need it, this full, on-sweeping spiritual force, whose fountain-head is the Holy Ghost. We can have it, for if Christ's, then we live near the deep, full hiding-place of power. If able to affirm, "can have," then let us say, "will." Let us have this equipment for our work. Let there be a crying for a blessing, knowing that on our side is that great pity of God finding expression in Christ and yearning to save a lost world. Let there be a taking hold of him and a taking from him. Thus re-enforced, occupied, possessed, let us go out to our work for another year.

Harvest-White.

THIS is the great ripening period of the year and the great season of the ingathering. Our Saxon ancestors called September the barley-month, their great grain crop coming from the yellow fields this month. It was in the autumn that our spiritual progenitors, the Hebrews, kept their joyous Feast of Tabernacles, when the harvest was ended, in the great, golden month Tisri. It is a busy time of the year, a crowded horn of plenty, but it is a calamity if harvesting in nature causes us to be neglectful of the harvest-fields in God's vast world of the spirit. For look up! Are not the fields white already? Is there not some one near you, in your very class, whose soul God makes your harvest-

ground? Always be expecting results—shoot for seed, and “bearded grain” for shoot of green. In some word of sympathetic inquiry, some special soul-reaching effort, ever be ready to gather in the sheaves. And there may be a constant ingathering, if a constant sowing. The ever-sower makes the ever-reaper. If we are ever striving to lead souls to Christ, we may expect that some one will ever be finding him. O patient sower, look up! The fields “are white already to harvest.”

Too Fast.

THERE are those who rush hastily into their work with little or no preparation, trusting to luck or chance, or some unknown and mysterious influence, to help them out after their work has begun. If such succeed they deserve no credit for it, because their success is owing to measures not originated by themselves; indeed, they may be said to succeed in spite of themselves.

Whatever is worth doing is worth preparing for. The time spent in preparation is not lost time; it is time most economically used. Its value is seen when an emergency arises, and the preparation acquired fits one for immediate action. Thus the skillful surgeon may save life by the quick exercise of knowledge which it required him years of careful training to acquire.

The Sunday-school teacher who goes to his class poorly prepared to explain and enforce the truths of the lesson, depending on “lesson helps” for his ideas, or on some chance thoughts which may come into his mind, cannot hope to succeed, and he does not deserve to succeed. Let him take time for preparation, so that he has some idea of the import of the lesson before he goes to his class.

Teachers who complain that they cannot find time for preparation need to be reminded that some of the best prepared and most successful Sunday-school teachers are among the busiest men in the world. They can be found at the head of factories, or railroads, or financial institutions, or in subordinate places where great responsibilities are upon them, and where time and labor are freely expended. Yet these busy people find time to get ready for their Sunday-school work. We suspect they have learned how to economize the time so that not a moment is lost.

Too Slow.

It must be confessed that, while some rush headlong into their work and fail, for want of timely preparation, it is possible on the other hand to give so much time to preparation as to dwarf, if not stifle, performance. Minute or unimportant matters are perhaps dwelt upon, while great principles are unheeded. The man is afraid to venture lest he

fail; and so he waits, discussing this item and considering that, until the days go by and his effort is lost because he is too late.

Sydney Smith has well said of this sort of people: “A great deal of talent is lost in the world for the want of a little courage. The fact is, that to do any thing in this world worth doing we must not stand back shivering, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can. It will not do to be perpetually calculating tasks and adjusting nice chances; it did very well before the flood, when a man could consult his friends upon an intended publication for a hundred and fifty years, and then live to see its success afterward. But at present a man waits, and doubts, and hesitates, and consults with his brother, and his uncle, and particular friends, till one fine day he finds that he is sixty years of age; that he has lost so much time in consulting his first cousin and particular friends that he has no more time to follow their advice.”

Perhaps some careful, painstaking Sunday-school teacher may derive profit from a consideration of these words. Our effort should be to find out the salient truths of the lesson and seek to bring them prominently before the class. Get the very best preparation you can, and then, with a prayer for God's blessing, go to your scholars and try to impress on them with strength and earnestness the great truth contained in the lesson for the day. Do not fritter away the time in considering irrelevant matters, but have the courage to keep to the text and enforce that.

Habits of Observing.

Who was it that said it? of whom?—that such or such a person had traveled more and seen less than any other man living? No matter. It is true that one can go about a great deal, and observe, hence learn, very little. We ought all of us to cultivate our senses more. How much more a painter sees in a landscape than you do, or than we. How much more a hunter sees and hears in the woods. How much more a sailor at sea. It would be an excellent thing for children once in a while to be sent out together on a walk, and returning be asked to give each an account of the things observed on the way. The comparison and contrast would be interesting and stimulating. Habits of observing should be carefully formed by us all. It would eventually make a vast difference in the sum of knowledge acquired, and in the interest of life.

One Thing that They do Not Like.

It is well that our children should have at least one thing to do that they do not like. This is for the sake of their moral training. In general, do not cross the grain of their inclination. Get the children themselves as far as possible on the side of

what you require of them. They will succeed better, and it will be easier for you. But if there is some particular thing that, on the whole, they ought to do, have them do it, in spite of their contrary inclination. They need to acquire the capacity of going against their own choice.

Taking an Inventory of Habits.

MANY people have habits that they are not conscious of. Nay, probably most of the habits of most people are unconscious habits. Perhaps this cannot be otherwise, and perhaps it should not. But if we live chiefly by unconscious habits, what care we ought to exercise to have our unconscious habits good! Hence it is wise to take, once in a while, yearly at least, an inventory of our habits. It is not safe to run on doing the business of life without knowing what our state is.

Sunday-Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

We take from the June number of the *Sunday-School Magazine*, the following statistics of the Sunday-schools in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The evidence of a healthy growth is gratifying. The figures are from the last Minutes of the Conferences: "We have an increase in our general Sunday-school census of 393 schools, 2,295 teachers, and 20,661 scholars. The statistics show that we have in all 10,268 schools, 67,869 teachers, and 530,595 scholars. The increase in the last ten years, from 1874 to 1884, is 2,975 schools, 19,046 teachers, 200,204 scholars. The circulation of our Sunday-school literature has increased from 153,000 issues monthly to about 500,000."

The Bible in Our Schools.

THE July number of the *Methodist Review* has an excellent article on the subject of "Bible Study in our Educational Institutions," in which the writer suggests the importance of the study of the Bible being incorporated into the course of study in our Church schools. In some of these schools this has already been done, and the success is gratifying. Our good friend, Dr. George M. Steele, has had such a course at Wilbraham, Mass., for several years, and we have heard him speak in glowing terms of the interest aroused in the subject.

Some of our schools have in connection with this a full course of Normal Study for preparing Sunday-school teachers for their work. It is a regular part of the curriculum, and so far as we have heard the experiment has in every case proved a success.

The young people in our schools are made familiar with the writings of ancient classic authors, and with the prominent writers in our own English

tongue; why should they not become equally familiar with the writers and the writings of the Bible? Why should they not learn the structure and the contents of the book, its wondrous history, its sublime poetry, its interesting narratives, its instructive parables?

Now that the Bible is excluded from the majority of our secular schools, it is all the more important that it be used in our Church schools; not simply read in daily chapel service, but studied as a textbook. Intellectual and spiritual profit would result to the students.

If Tempted.

If tempted—and who is beyond it?—think how many are looking upon the man or woman at the head of the class, and watching you sharply. You occupy a representative position, and Christ's religion is on trial in you. In one sense, you take the place of the absent Christ, and are to prove the worth of his religion. When driven by the tempter into the wilderness, and you come out of it pale yet victorious and angel-ministered like your Master, you have then demonstrated the reality of Christian faith, that Christ did once live and is also yet living. If out of the wilderness of temptation you come bruised and scarred and vanquished, what wonder if some boy or girl question the reality of religion and ask if Christ still be on the earth? Does the little star winking afar in the sapphire sky know how many vessels are sailing by it? Be a clean, pure, bright star for the sake of those who watch you.

Sunday-School Library Books.

Our attention was lately called to a very sensible plan for the selection of books for Sunday-school libraries and for their introduction to the scholars. The plan is one which was proposed by Mr. S. S. Green in an article in *The Library Journal*. The idea of introducing books and readers is one well worth considering.

The writer tells how an annual weeding process has been kept up after having been begun a number of years ago. He says:

"Every book was read by competent persons, and the poorest books were put out of the library. This weeding process has gone on year by year; as new books have been added, others not representing a high standard of merit have been removed from the shelves. Great care has been taken to examine conscientiously new books before putting them into the library. The result is, that the Sunday-school now has an excellent library. . . . Books are now bought as published. A contribution of about a hundred dollars is taken up annually. This money is put into the hands of the treasurer of the library committee, and the sub-committee on

purchases get from a book-store such books as it seems probable will answer our purposes, read them carefully, and buy such as prove desirable. The subcommittee consists of two highly cultivated young ladies. When they have selected two or three books they make notes of their contents. The books are then placed on a table in the minister's room, and the superintendent of the school calls attention to them—reading to scholars a short description of each book prepared by the subcommittee, and inviting the scholars to examine the books after the close of the current session of the school, or before the opening of the school the following Sunday. After these two opportunities have been given to the children to look at the books and handle them, they are put into the library and are ready to be taken out. This subcommittee has taken another important step within a year or two. The members have read over again all the books in the library and made notes descriptive of their contents, and the school has elected one of the ladies a consulting librarian. She sits at a little table in the school-room during the sessions of the school, and with her notes before her receives every teacher or scholar who wishes to consult about the selection of a book, and gives whatever assistance is asked for in picking out interesting and suitable books. She is kept very busy, and is doing a work of great value.”

Child-Festivals.

BY M. V. M.

FROEBEL calls teachers "True guardians and gardeners of children." Not only does the teacher called of God protect and defend the innocence of childhood, but he tills the soil of the fresh young heart, sows the seeds of truth, and carefully cultivates the tender germs as they begin to push up into sight. Any thing which helps on this blessed work must, in the nature of things, be eagerly welcomed by such a teacher.

In that delightful book, "Reminiscences of Froebel," by Baroness Von Bülow, we read of a child-festival at Altenstein, planned by Froebel and his friend and co-laborer Middendorff, which suggests an idea, not indeed new to Sunday-school workers, but having in it larger possibilities for good than we had seen, possibly, especially among the smaller children. In making preparation for this festival, we read of Froebel and Middendorff, two old men whose lives illustrated the sentiment, "Come, let us live for our children," that "the joy of their souls was visible in their faces, like that of mothers the day before Christmas." And this is not surprising, for to "make children happy blesses human hearts."

The country picnic, the city excursion and festival, are all familiar to us. We know what occasions of delight they are to the children, and under the influence of their pure joy in this kind of association we are ready to feel that such innocent recreations should be multiplied. But we are in a busy world, and a play day for a large school calls for an amount

of time and labor which many teachers can ill afford to give. Is there not some way in which these festive days may be increased without putting too great burdens upon teachers?

A primary class teacher in a school where picnics and excursions were unknown solved the question for herself and her class by giving three or four "parties" in the course of the year. They were very simple parties indeed, involving very little in the way of preparation. In the summer they were held on a shaded lawn, kindly offered by a friend. Hammocks were swung under the trees, but for the most part the children occupied themselves with simple games, heartily participated in by their teachers. Ice-cream and cake made glad the little hearts, at trifling cost, and when the day declined the children sat in little groups on the grass and sang their sweet songs of love and praise to Jesus.

When the weather did not admit of an out-door festival, the children gathered in the large school-room. Here it was not so easy to manage them, but love and tact can overcome a world of difficulties, and it was noticeable in all these gatherings, that there was no ill-natured mischief. The fun was hearty, genuine, and loving, and the children, as well as their teachers, went home the better, because the happier, for the afternoon's pleasure.

The union of several classes from the main school in such a festival could be easily accomplished. Children love to play, and it is a healthy, because a natural, instinct. Bring them together in sufficient numbers, and in a place where they can play, and then see what a joyous time they will have! They may need a little guidance, but they will enjoy their sport all the more if their teachers enter into it with zest and sympathy.

Lawn parties in warm weather are perhaps preferable to any others, unless, indeed, a shady wood is near at hand. In the large cities, teachers can take their classes to the public parks, and so give the children the companionship of nature, but if this be impracticable for any reason, they can meet them in the church, in their own homes, or at a friend's home. The teacher needs to come into contact with the taught oftener than once a week, and in order to know the child it must be seen and studied in company with other children.

A superintendent of a large city school, who was wise with the wisdom of love, planned and carried out, though a very busy man, a "May Festival" last season, which showed how obstacles can be overcome by a loving persistence. Large numbers of the school participated in the simple little play which ended in a rollicking scene around the May-pole. The large stage was strewn with fresh grass, and all the surroundings were as country-like as they could be made. The superintendent, though not a young man, entered into the enjoyment of it quite as heartily as did the children, and gained as much from it, no doubt, as they did!

"Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely," let us give to the children whom we seek to lead into the paths of peace.

There are many ways of teaching, and the least to be desired, for little children, is that in which truth is presented without illustration. A child-festival gives opportunity for the practical teaching of some of the highest truths, and we may safely say that no child can ever lose out of his heart and life the influence of a happy day of glad companionship with teacher and playmates, all sweetened and hallowed by the thought of the relationship to Jesus which is the bond of living union.

"Eli Perceived that the Lord had Called the Child."

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

In the manner of governing his own house, Eli certainly lacked wisdom, but with reference to the child Samuel he showed a discernment which I fear we are sometimes slow to practice with our children. Eli could have had no reason to look for a revelation from God to his little disciple, but we ought to expect the Spirit of God to speak to our little ones. "The promise is to you and to your children." They were consecrated to God at their birth, and at their baptism; by the hand of faith, by the voice of prayer, by the open Bible, we have led them to God, and now it is our privilege and our duty confidently to look for an early turning of their hearts to their heavenly Father.

There are many of us, I am bound to believe, who can look back and remember times in our early childhood when we longed to be sure of God's forgiveness and love, when in some quiet hour the Spirit of God called us, we know now distinctly called us, but we wist not then any more than the child Samuel that it was the Lord. Some of us, by God's blessing, were within reach of Christian teaching, which opened our minds, and enabled us to say, even then, on the threshold of life, for time and eternity, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." But sometimes, alas! for want of that teaching and encouragement the child puts away that uncomfortable pressure of thought, stops its ears with games and excitements against the still small voice, and loses, for that time at least, the sweetness of adoption into the family of Christ.

Now, expecting this voice to speak to our children, we ought to be looking for the signs of his coming. We ought to keep open the avenue of approach, speaking to them daily of God their Father, God their Saviour, and God the Holy Spirit, their Friend and Companion. Let us keep open, too, the path between our own hearts and these little learners of truth; let no fretfulness on our own part, or press of care, or rush of business, or pre-occupation of sadness give them reason to doubt our readiness to answer their timid questioning. How tenderly and patiently old Eli answered the troubled boy who disturbed his midnight rest, though he dreamed not at first who had spoken to the lad!

But a child is often slow to speak of its religious feelings, of its thoughts toward God. Whether it be our fault or theirs, it is too generally the case that they are shy of such speech. Then, mother,

teacher, pastor, watch for the signs. As surely as the returning life of spring is harbingered by soft air, swelling buds, tender color, just so surely does the wakening life of the young soul betray its presence by the moistened eye, the earnest tone, the effort to do right in the little matters of daily living. O let us be on the watch for these blessed signs that the Lord is speaking to our children, that we may teach them to recognize the infinite importance of heeding the Voice Divine!

Opening and Closing Services for Third Quarter of 1885.

OPENING SERVICE

- I. SILENCE.
- II. THE DOXOLOGY.
- III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. *Psa.* 78. 1.

SCHOOL. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. *Deut.* 32. 2.

SUPT. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. *Deut.* 30. 11, 14.

SCHOOL. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. *Psa.* 119. 18.

SUPT. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. *John* 5. 39.

SCHOOL. But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name. *John* 20. 31.

IV. SINGING.

V. PRAYER.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.
- III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, OUTLINE, AND DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION, by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON, by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. THE SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.*
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. *Ecc.* 12. 13.

SCHOOL. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. *Phil.* 4. 8.

III. DISMISSAL.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried: the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

* Special Lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE KINGS.

B. C. 896.]

LESSON X. ELIJAH TRANSLATED.

[Sept. 6.]

2 Kings 2. 1-15. [Commit to memory verses 9-11.]



1 And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up E-li'jah into heaven by a whirlwind, that E-li'jah went with E-li'sha from Gil'gal.

2 And E-li'jah said unto E-li'sha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth'-el. And E-li'sha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth'-el.

3 And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth'-el came forth to E-li'sha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

4 And E-li'jah said unto him, E-li'sha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jer'i-cho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jer'i-cho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jer'i-cho came to E-li'sha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

6 And E-li'jah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here, for the LORD hath sent me to Jor'dan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jor'dan.

8 And E-li'jah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that E-li'jah said unto E-li'sha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And E-li'sha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and E-li'jah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 And E-li'sha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Is'-ra-el, and the horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

13 He took up also the mantle of E-li'jah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jor'dan:

14 And took the mantle of E-li'jah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of E-li'jah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and E-li'sha went over.

15 And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jer'i-cho saw him, they said, The spirit of E-li'jah doth rest on E-li'sha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

General Statement.

Ten years, perhaps fifteen, have passed since Elijah stood before the altar on Carmel, and before the Lord on Horeb. Since that day the cause of God has made substantial progress in Israel. The altars of the calves remain, and the worship of Baal is still celebrated, but their votaries are less in number, and near each of the great idol-shrines is an organized "school of the prophets," resounding with praise to the Lord. Throughout the land the hearts of the people are turning Godward, and many a home has become a temple to Jehovah. Ahab lies in his grave, having died like a king at the last, but Jezebel still lives, though diminished in influence. The new times demand new leaders. The age of Elijah, the smiter, is over, and that of Elisha, the builder, is to begin. The aged prophet traverses the field of his toils, and visits the schools which have arisen

through his preaching. By his side walks his younger disciple, who will not leave him, even though commanded. They speak their farewells at Gilgal, they revisit Beth-el, they descend the mountains to Jericho, they stand by Jordan. The old Gileadite sweeps the river with his mantle, and through the river waters lead the way toward the land of his birth. As the two walk on in converse, suddenly the younger prophet beholds a chariot of fire and horses of flame descending from the skies. There is no time for parting, for in a moment Elijah is caught up in the storm to join the goodly fellowship of the prophets on the heavenly hills, from whence he shall yet come to join One greater than himself on a high mountain apart, and talk with him of the blood shed for the salvation of the world.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. It came to pass. The time is uncertain. The connection would point to about 896 B. C., but from the fact that Elijah wrote a note to King Jehoram of Judah, whose reign began 891 B. C., we conclude that it was later. **When the Lord.** Elijah's peculiar work was done, and another and different type of leader was now needed; so God takes him home. **Take up Elijah.** Nowhere in the Bible is such an expression used to mean death; and it can only be interpreted to indicate that Elijah was "taken up" to heaven. **By a whirlwind.** Both to Job and to Ezekiel God was manifested in a whirlwind. Job 38. 1; Ezek. 1. 4. **Went with Elisha.** Ten years before, Elijah had summoned Elisha from his father's farm in the Jordan valley to the wandering life of a prophet. He had accepted the call, and had been aiding Elijah even in lowly service (2 Kings 3. 11, "poured water on the hands of Elijah") and in the organization of the "seven thousand" faithful ones. **From Gilgal.** Not the Gilgal near Jericho, but another among the mountains, nine miles north of Beth-el, and a seat of idol-worship. Learn from this verse, (1) That God brings his worker home when his task is complete. (2) The trials of a Christian are as nothing compared with his triumph.

2. Tarry here. Both Elijah and Elisha knew that the separation was near at hand. Perhaps the old prophet desired to be left alone, perhaps he would test the earnestness of his disciple. **To Beth-el.** A city among the mountains, north of Jerusalem, hallowed by memories of Abraham's altar and Jacob's ladder; but

at that time, like Gilgal, an idol sanctuary. But in both these places "schools of the prophets" had been established to counteract the evil influence. (3) Where sin is abounding and sinners are most numerous the Church should be organized. **As the Lord liveth.** A solemn form of adjuration among the Israelites, used only on matters of high importance. **I will not leave thee.** He showed his fidelity by his persistent following, and perhaps he felt that in his heart his master desired his presence.

3. The sons of the prophets. In the days of Samuel these prophetic schools had been established, and from them had risen many inspired teachers. But they seem to have lapsed until after Elisha was associated with Elijah, when we read of them again. They were assemblies of holy men for prayer, praise, and religious instruction. They were not monasteries, for some of the "sons of the prophets" were married men; but they formed religious communities which kept the flame of the true worship shining. (4) In our time, every Sunday-school should be a school of the prophets. **Knowest thou.** In some way—how it is needless to conjecture—the revelation of Elijah's departure had been received, both by Elisha and the other disciples. Perhaps his manner, his look, and his conversation all partook of the heavenly glory. **Thy master from thy head.** The teacher while giving instruction sat on an elevated seat and the pupils were on the floor or the ground at his feet. **Hold ye your peace.** He felt that the subject was too sacred to become the theme of con-

version. (5) *When our earthly teachers are taken, we have still the Great Teacher in his word.*

4, 5. To Jericho. A well-known city in the Jordan valley, near the head of the Dead Sea. It had been recently rebuilt, and was also a center of prophetic influence. For some time after Elijah's translation, Elisha made it his home and wrought miracles in it. It is now desolate and uninhabited. **They came.** It was a journey of twelve miles down the mountain from Beth-el to Jericho. **Sons of the prophets.** So at Jericho also was a "school of the prophets." Yet only ten years before Elijah had lost heart and felt that his life had been in vain, and the light of truth was dying out! (6) *God knows more about the success of his cause than we do.*

6. Sent me to Jordan. About five miles from Jericho is a bend in the river Jordan, where the ascension of Elijah may have taken place. **I will not leave thee.** For the third time the same request and the same answer; and then persistent faithfulness has its reward. **They two went on.** Picture the scene as the two walk together, in marked contrast, the white-haired old prophet, with shining face, and the young man by his side; their backs toward Jericho, their faces toward Jordan.

7. Fifty men. A large school it must have been to furnish so many, as well as another fifty men afterward sent out. Ver. 16. **Stood to view.** Perhaps on the hill near Jericho, from which the plain, the river, and the mountains of Moab are all distinctly visible. They expected to see some miracle, but not the ascension of the prophet.

8. His mantle. The rough sheepskin cloak, the badge of his prophetic office, in which he had wrapped his face at Horeb, and with which he had called Elisha. **Wrapped it.** Folding in such a form as to make it convenient for striking the water. **Smote the waters.** As Moses's rod was his prophetic ensign, so was Elijah's mantle; and the effects which followed one at the Red Sea followed the other at Jordan. Thus the same mantle in Elisha's hands would be recognized as conveying to him Elijah's power. **They were divided.** We have not Elijah's mantle, but we can have the faith without which it would have been only a sheepskin. (7) *O for a faith that will not shrink!*

9. Ask what I shall do. The departing saint thinks not of himself, but of his steadfast companion and his needs; and he gives him a test to show whether his aims are spiritual or material. (8) *What would be our answer to such a question? Before I be taken away.* Whatever Elijah is to do for Elisha must be done before his rapture; so there is no warrant for the Romish doctrine of the intercession of departed saints. (9) *We have but one Advocate before the throne, and we need no other.* **Let a double portion.** The margin of the Rev. Ver. explains this as meaning, "the portion of the first-born." He asked to be Elijah's heir, not to estate, but to his endowment of power, a noble choice.

10. A hard thing. Because it was not in his power to give, but dependent solely on God's will, which not even a prophet can always infallibly forecast. **If thou**

see me (the words *when I am* in Italics should be omitted) **taken.** If his spiritual fellowship is so close and his spiritual insight so keen as to see the "horses and chariot," invisible to other eyes, then he might know that he was the man destined to carry on Elijah's work; for only one of sharpened spiritual senses, one who could "see the invisible," would answer for that great mission.

11. Went on and talked. A veil is drawn over the themes of that interview, but we may be assured that they were not houses and lands, politics or pleasures, about which earthly minds love to talk. **A chariot of fire and horses of fire.** Not a vision or dream, but an objective reality; yet they were spiritual and not material, and seen only by the spiritual, not the fleshly eye. **Elijah went up.** Changed no doubt, into a spiritual body, as the living saints will be when Christ comes; for the earthly cannot inherit the heavenly. **Into heaven.** The abode of God, of the angels, and of glorified saints awaiting the resurrection of their bodies. (10) *We too may ascend where Elijah dwells.*

12. Elisha saw. Saw the whole scene, horses, chariot, ascending prophet, and thus knew that his petition was granted. But he saw it with the inner and higher senses, for it belonged to the spiritual, not the material world. See 2 Kings 6. 17. **My father.** The spiritual tie was stronger than the natural. Elijah was the father who had given him insight into the things of God. **The chariot of Israel.** This sentence of itself shows that Elisha's spiritual insight was keen. Other men saw in Elijah "a wild man," a "troubler of Israel;" Elisha saw that under that rough mantle lay the real strength of Israel, mightier than serried hosts; because through him the people were kept in fellowship with God. (11) *The true safeguard of a nation is its godly men. Rent them in two pieces.* Feeling for the moment an inexpressible sense of loneliness as his master was taken from him.

13. 14. Took up also the mantle. This was to be the token of his prophetic authority, as it had been of Elijah's. **Where is the Lord God of Elijah?** Though the prophet was gone, the Lord, from whom his power came, remained; and in that consciousness he could go forward and complete Elijah's work. (12) *Let this thought strengthen the Church of to-day when its leaders are removed. When he also.* The same faith and purpose and insight dwelling in Elisha as in Elijah, the same results followed. **They parted.** Over the sundered waters two had gone, and now one came back, with the look of power upon his face.

15. Saw him. They had seen the former crossing, now they saw this; and the token of power in Elijah's mantle; but they had not seen Elijah's ascension. **The spirit of Elijah.** They possessed a measure of the same spirit which had endowed both the prophets; enough to trace God's hand and to recognize Elisha as now their head. **They bowed themselves.** Not in worship, but in reverence for the high honor which God had bestowed. (13) *Let us count it the highest honor when from our school God calls forth one to be his messenger to men.*

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Elijah translated. 2 Kings 2. 1-15.
Tu. Elijah's power through God. 2 Kings 1. 1-18.
W. Enoch with God. Gen. 5. 18-32.
Th. Christ's spirit in his disciples. Acts 1. 1-14.
F. Unbelief and irreverence. 2 Kings 2. 16-25.
S. Jordan's waters divided. Josh. 3. 9-17.
S. The eternal glory of God. Psa. 104. 1-24.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Gen. 5. 24.

LESSON HYMN. S. M.

Hymnal. No. 502.

Hasten the joyful day
 Which shall my sins consume;
 When old things shall be done away,
 And all things new become.
 I want the witness, Lord,
 That all I do is right,
 According to thy will and word,
 Well pleasing in thy sight.

I ask no higher state;
 Indulge me but in this,
 And soon or later then translate
 To my eternal bliss.

TIME.—B. C. 896.

PLACES.—1. Gilgal, north of Beth-el; 2. Beth-el, twelve miles north of Jerusalem; 3. Jericho, in the Jordan valley.

RULERS.—Ahaziah, son of Ahab, eighth King of Israel; Jehoshaphat, fourth King of Judah; Mesha, King of Moab; Ben-hadad II., King of Damascus and Syria.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. Ahab was slain at Ramoth-gilead, in war with the Syrians, and was succeeded by Ahaziah; 2. Elijah sent a warning of death to Ahaziah, because of his idol-worship, and called down fire from heaven upon the soldiers who were sent to arrest him. Read 1 Kings 22 and 2 Kings 1.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Victory over death.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Journey, v. 1-8.
 To what city did the two prophets go?
 What did Elijah say to Elisha?

What passed between the sons of the prophets and Elisha?

What occurred when the two men reached the Jordan?

2. The Request, v. 9, 10.

What did Elisha ask of Elijah?

What did he mean by a "double portion of thy spirit?"

Why was this asking a "hard thing?"

On what condition was it to be granted?

3. The Chariot, v. 11, 12.

What is meant by the chariot and horses of fire?

What became of Elijah?

4. The Mantle, v. 13-15.

What was Elisha's exclamation?

What did he mean by rending his clothes?

What became of Elijah's mantle?

What did Elisha do with it?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That good men are especially honored of God?
2. That it is wise to covet earnestly the best gifts?
3. That the life to come is a continuance of this?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Journey, v. 1-8.

Who were companions on the journey to Gilgal?

What proposal did Elijah make?

What was Elisha's answer?

What question was asked of Elisha by the prophets?

What was his reply?

Where were this question and answer repeated?

Where did the travelers come at last?

Who were distant spectators?

How was a passage made over Jordan?

2. The Request, v. 9, 10.

What privilege did Elijah offer his companion?

What request did Elisha make?

On what condition was the promise given?

3. The Chariot, v. 11, 12.

What happened as they talked?

What became of Elijah?

Who was witness of his departure?

What was Elisha's cry?

How did he show his grief?

4. The Mantle, v. 13-15.

What had Elijah left behind him?

What did Elisha do with it?

What followed this act?

What was the testimony of the sons of the prophets?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—1. The devotion of true friendship? 2. The prayer of a humble heart? 3. The evidence of divine favor?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was with Elijah the last years of his life? **Elisha, his servant and helper.**

What was Elisha asked at Beth-el and at Jericho by the sons of the prophets? **"Do you know the Lord will take away your master to-day?"**

What did he answer? **"Yes, I know; but hush! I do not want to talk about it."**

See if you can find out how many times that day Elisha said, **"I will not leave you."**

When together they came to the river Jordan what did Elijah do? **Took off his mantle, and with it struck the water.**

What happened? **The waters parted, and they two went over on dry ground.**

What did Elijah ask Elisha? **"What shall I do for you before I am taken away?"**

What did Elisha say? **"I ask that same spirit which has been in you."**

What did Elijah answer? **"If you see me when I am taken away, it shall be so."**

While they walked and talked what happened? **There came a chariot of fire, and horses of fire.**

What then? **Elijah was carried up into heaven as if in a whirlwind.**

Did Elisha see him go up? **He did.**

What became of Elijah's mantle? **Elisha caught it as it fell from Elijah.**

How did Elisha get back over Jordan? **He took the mantle and did as Elijah had done.**

What did the followers of the prophets say when they

saw Elisha? **"The spirit of Elijah rests upon Elisha."**

What did they do? **Bowed before him.**

Words with Little People.

It will make no difference whether we die or are alive and taken up when Jesus comes, if only we are ready to go. Only one thing need make you afraid, and that is, if you do not come *now* and let him wash away all your sins. *Do come*, then; keep so near to him that whether you live to hear the sound of his coming, or are called to die, you will clap your little hands for joy.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Elisha say to the repeated requests of Elijah that he should tarry while Elijah went on? **"I will not leave thee."**

2. What followed Elijah's smiting the waters with his mantle? **"They were divided hither and thither."**

3. For what did Elisha ask of Elijah? **A double portion of his spirit.**

4. How did Elijah go up into heaven? **"Elijah went up by a whirlwind."**

5. What did the prophets which were to view at Jericho say when they saw Elisha? **"The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha."**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Two Prophets.

I. THE PERSISTENT DISCIPLE.

1. *When the Lord would take up Elijah.* v. 1.
"Where I am there also shall my servant be." John 12. 26.

2. *Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here.* v. 2.
"Why will ye go with me?" Ruth 1. 11.

3. *Elisha said.... I will not leave thee.* v. 2, 4, 6.
"A friend.... closer than a brother," Prov. 18. 24.

4. *They two went on.* v. 6.
"Whither thou goest, I will go." Ruth 1. 16.

5. *They two stood by Jordan.* v. 7.
"My life draweth nigh unto the grave." Ps. 88. 3.

6. *They two went over on dry ground.* v. 8.
"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Isa. 43. 2.

II. THE EARNEST DESIRE.

1. *Ask what I shall do for thee.* v. 9.
"Whatsoever ye shall ask.... I will do." John 14. 13.

2. *A double portion of thy spirit.* v. 9.
"I will render double unto thee." Zech. 9. 12.

3. *Hast asked a hard thing.* v. 10.
"With God all things are possible." Matt. 19. 26.

4. *If thou see me.... taken.... it shall be so.* v. 10.
"Power to become the sons of God." John 1. 12.

III. THE GLORIOUS DEPARTURE.

1. *They still went on and talked.* v. 11.
"We took sweet counsel together." Ps. 55. 14.

2. *There appeared a chariot of fire.* v. 11.
"The Son of man coming in the clouds." Matt. 24. 30.

3. *Parted them.... asunder.* v. 11.
"For God took him." Gen. 5. 24.

4. *Elijah went up.... into heaven.* v. 11.
"So shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4. 17.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Elijah and Elisha.

1. True love is persistent. It will not be turned aside by any entreaty, trial, or difficulty. v. 1-6.
2. True faith goes where God's Spirit calls; and as it goes on, trusting, the way opens, and difficulties disappear. v. 1-6.
3. True sympathy requires but few words. The overburdened heart knows its own bitterness. v. 1-6.
4. True living is to live for others. Elijah's last journey, his last thoughts, like all his life, were for others' good. v. 9.
5. True peace may come as the result of a storm, and that which to others may seem a whirlwind and a devouring fire may be the very means appointed for our eternal peace. v. 11-13.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

THERE is a story of a philosopher of classic times who, not satisfied with the honor he received during the course of his life, was desirous of distinguishing himself beyond other mortals at its close, and of having it believed that he ascended up to heaven without dying. To obtain this end he threw himself into the crater of a volcano, thinking to leave no trace behind. But in the next eruption the sandals of the ambitious man were thrown out of the crater, and thus his fate was discovered and his aspirations brought to naught. The universal dominion claimed by Death could not be, even apparently, set aside. There is a more modern tale of a young French prince who asked with some apprehension: "Must kings then die?" Even an obsequious courtier dared not reply in the negative, and the answer came, regretfully, "Sometimes, sir."

Yet Scripture tells us that this universal sovereignty has been twice set aside. There have been two men, partakers of the infirmities of other mortals, over whom Death had no power, who never felt his cold touch, never experienced the severance of body and spirit. Such a remarkable exemption makes these two men of exceptional interest, and though separated from one another by the lapse of hundreds of years, their lives are rightly linked together in to-day's lesson, the one being brought before us in the passage for reading, the other in the Golden Text. Let us ask then: What was there in common in the lives of the two thus so strikingly honored of God?

First, they were almost solitary witnesses for God in a time of apostasy. It was when "all flesh had corrupted itself," and the wickedness of man had become great on the earth, that Enoch "walked with God." A lonely man among those who had cast off the fear of the Almighty, he not only witnessed by his life, but boldly prophesied of the Lord's coming and of the vengeance that should overtake the ungodly. Jude 14. So it was with Elijah, as we have seen. There were, it is true, still seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed

the knee to Baal, but they were hidden ones. On Mount Carmel he had stood alone as Jehovah's witness. Against him the reproach was cast that he was the "troubler of Israel." Of the "hundred men of the Lord's prophets" who had been rescued by Obadiah we read nothing more save only Micaiah the son of Imlah. 1 Kings 22. 8.

Secondly, they walked with God. Without this there could have been no true witness. If they had gone their own way and pleased themselves their words would have had little weight. But men saw that they were directed by Another—and not merely directed, but accompanied; that though they might stand alone amid their fellows, the Mighty One was with them. Elijah's description of himself was, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand." Of Enoch it is written, "He walked with God."

These two, who had kept close to God and had stood forth as his witnesses in the midst of abounding evil, were the two chosen to escape the pangs of death and the humiliation of the grave. Will there ever be any others?

Look at 1 Cor. 15. 51; 1 Thess. 4. 17. Enoch and Elijah were but the first fruits of a great company. At the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ those of his servants who are yet living shall be caught up like the two holy men of old. Day by day we see people dying around us, but the day is coming when Death shall never more touch one of the people of God. The moment Christ appears Death's reign will be over. And yet those who have died "in the Lord" are to have the precedence: "The dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4. 16. So that the great company of those who remain will not be more blessed or more honored than the great company of those who have died. Both must be changed, the one by resurrection, the other by translation.

How can we insure our place in one or other of these happy companies?

We must be among those who walk with God. To walk with another there must be, 1. Agreement (see Amos 3. 8), sin put away through the blood of Christ, and nothing between to separate us from him. The other points may be illustrated by the narrative of Elijah's walk with Elisha. 2. Friendship. Elisha was Elijah's servant, but it was a service of love. He might have remained behind when Elijah went on his farewell journey to the "sons of the prophets" at Beth-el and at Jericho. Love impelled him to keep close to his master. 3. Devotion. Suppose the way is rough, or long, or sorrowful? Elisha must have dreaded the questions that were put to him at the different stages. He must have dreaded the parting. But he refused to leave his master. Three times over he repeated his resolve: "I will not leave thee;" and he kept it. Happy is the soul that can say:

"I would rather walk in the dark with God,
Than go alone in the light."

We must be among those who witness for Christ. His servants are here for this purpose—to witness

for him. Elisha had to take up the mission and work of Elijah when the latter was translated. And that he might be enabled to do this he was endowed, like his master, with power from on high; so that it was said of him: "The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha." So there is power for the servants of Christ. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But this parting gift of our Lord (John 16. 7) may be had by all who ask. Luke 11. 13.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON, M.D., D.D.

Elijah Translated. 2 Kings 2. 1-15.

1. "The Lord would take up Elijah into heaven." The absoluteness and mystery of Jehovah's purposes. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?" Isa. 40. 13, 14; Dan. 4. 3; Mal. 4. 5; Deut. 29. 29; Matt. 24. 36.
2. "By a whirlwind." The place of instrumentalities in carrying out the divine purposes. "Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Acts 27. 31; 27. 22-31; 1 Kings 21. 19, with 1 Kings 22. 37, 38; Micah 5. 2, with Luke 2. 1-4.
3. "Into heaven." Heaven, to which the Lord purposed to translate Elijah in an instant. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Gen. 5. 24; 1 Kings 8. 30; Matt. 6. 9; Isa. 66. 1; John 14. 2.
4. "And Elijah said unto Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee." The modesty, humility, of Elijah to the last; he would have no one witness his glorification. "Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." 1 Kings 18. 37; Micah 6. 8; Exod. 3. 11; Isa. 6. 5; Jer. 1. 6.
5. "And Elisha said unto him, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." Oaths the fidelity of love may properly swear. "And Jonathan said to David, go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever." 1 Sam. 20. 42; Heb. 6. 17; Lev. 19. 12; 1 Cor. 13. 8, 13; Heb. 11. 25.
6. "Tarry, I pray thee, here." The third and sufficient test of Elisha's fidelity and fitness to succeed Elijah. "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not." Prov. 27. 10; 20. 6; Heb. 6. 10, 11; 1 Pet. 1. 7; Luke 8. 13.
7. "They were divided hither and thither." God was with Elijah at Jordan, and so he will be with us, his people. "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." Heb. 2. 15; 2 Tim. 1. 10; Phil. 1. 21; Psa. 48. 14; Rev. 14. 13.
8. "Ask what I shall do for thee." "Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Elijah's cautious invitation, and Elisha's wise response. "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad." 1 Kings 3. 9; Luke 10. 42; Psa. 27. 4; 73. 25; Deut. 22. 5; Prov. 16. 16.
9. "If thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee." Watchfulness, vigilance, in duty God will reward. "And what I say unto you, I

say unto all, Watch." Mark 13. 37; Luke 12. 37; Matt. 24. 44-46; 25. 5, 8; Rev. 16. 15.

10. "And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." God sends for human souls as he pleases. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Heb. 11. 5; Deut. 34. 4, 5; Gen. 25. 7; Luke 12. 20; Psa. 23. 4.

11. "He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him." Elisha became Elijah's official successor. "And Elisha the son of Shaphat, of Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room." 1 Kings 19. 16; 2 Kings 3. 17-20; 7. 1; 8. 10-13; 13. 14-19.

12. "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" Elisha's prayer for divine recognition, of which he did not feel certain. "The priests said not, Where is the Lord?" Jer. 2. 8; Isa. 55. 6; Psa. 5. 2; 2 Chron. 30. 27; 1 Kings 18. 36.

Lessons:

1. It was not Elijah's merit that moved God to translate him, but his own sovereign and inexplicable pleasure. We may know the reason hereafter, ver. 1.
2. Elijah thoroughly tested Elisha. It was doubtless God's order. God would have him realize the awful significance of officially succeeding Elijah, vers. 2-6.
3. Elijah, too, would have his translation occur in private, for fear he, and not God, might be glorified of men.
4. Elisha's perseverance was a good illustration of the persistent devotion of love and reverence, vers. 2-6.
5. The young ministers attending the theological seminary at Beth-el were assured that a great day had come, the appearance of Elijah proved it.
6. To get to heaven even Elijah had to cross the Jordan. God aided him to accomplish it, and so he will aid all the rest of his saints. "Death like a narrow sea divides," etc.
7. Elisha had a golden opportunity, ver. 9, which he embraced ambitiously, but worthily. His choice gave him earthly immortality.
8. Whom God calls he commissions and uses, vers. 13-15.

Berean Methods.

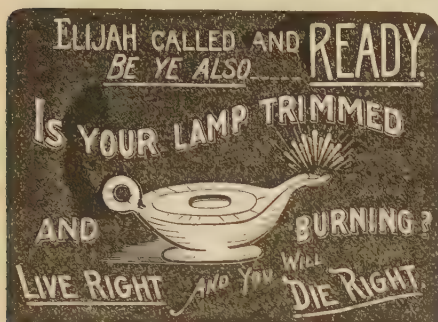
Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Perhaps a good "key-thought" to our lesson might be found in verse 14, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"....Our lesson shows what God does for his people. 1. *He takes them to heaven when their work is done.* Ver. 1. See in the General Statement what Elijah's work had been, and how it was needed no longer. 2. *He calls forth new men to take the place of the old.* Compare Elijah and Elisha; and show how Elisha received training for his work. 3. *He enters into communion with his people;* revealing his will as to the "sons of the prophets." 4. *He gives power over nature and the world,* for example, Elijah's mantle sweeping the waters. 5. *He gives answer to prayer.* Elisha's desire was his prayer, and it was answered in the bestowment of "the double portion." 6. *He gives victory over death.* Show Elijah's triumph, as a picture of the triumph of every dying saint. 7. *He gives power among men.* Ver. 15....Another line of teaching may be found in Elisha's conduct, which showed: 1.) *Self-sacrifice.* (See his choice in 1 Kings 19. 19-21. 2.) *Lowly service.* (See 2 Kings 3. 11.) 3.) *Holy companionship.* He went with Elijah, and thus partook of his spirit. 4.) *Aspiration;* a noble ambition. Ver. 9. 5.) *Spiritual insight.* Elisha saw, when others only "stood to view."

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 3: Schools of the prophets, 326. Ver. 12: Rending the clothes, 70. Vers. 13, 14: The prophet's mantle, 182.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



In reviewing the blackboard lesson, the principal thought set forth is the necessity of living right, and being ready to go when the Master calls. Our lamps must be trimmed and burning, and always ready.

DIRECTIONS FOR COLORING DIAGRAM. The upper sentences in blue, lightened with white at the sides. The lamp with yellow, and the sentence around it with red. The lower sentence with white.

DEATH DOES NOT END ALL.

I WILL LEAVE AN INFLUENCE FOR GOOD OR FOR EVIL.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Walking with God.* Call upon some child to tell how Elijah looked, spoke, etc. Let another tell the story of Elijah and the famine; another, Elijah and the priests of Baal, and in this way bring out a review of Elijah's life. Tell that now Elijah's work on earth was nearly ended, and God was ready to take him to heaven. Ask how God had shown love and care for Elijah on earth, and show that the good Father who takes care of us here will not leave us alone when we go away from here



Make several steps on the board. Print on the first, "Faith," Elijah believed God. On the second, "Prayer," Elijah talked with God. On the third, "Work," Elijah listened to God. On the fourth, "Obedience," Elijah walked with God. Above make a star showing the way upward. Show how children can go up the same way that Elijah did, and that these steps always lead to the same blessed place.

THE LESSON STORY.

Tell that Elijah was now an old man. Elisha was his servant and pupil. He had been with Elijah about

eight years and loved him very much. In simple words describe the walk which the two took, paraphrasing the conversation, dwelling upon Elisha's desire to have the spirit of Elijah rest upon him. Tell that he wanted this because Elijah had the spirit of the Lord, and that we, too, ought to want to be like good people. Call for Golden Text, and teach that this is what was done for Elijah—God took him. He will take each one of his children some day; whatever may be the way, it will be the best way. Lead children to look upon death as a friend, since it leads us into the presence of God, but show that only those can meet death calmly and sweetly who have obeyed God here. Finish the story, telling that Elisha had his request granted, and that now the Spirit of the Lord was given him, and he became the Lord's prophet in place of Elijah.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Elijah is going home! What deep, serious interest attends the news wherever it may go! They know it at Beth-el among the sons of the prophets. In how many villages, in how many homes, people may have been saying, "The prophet is going home. He is going to-day." But when, where, and how? How Elisha watches his movements! When Elijah says, "Tarry here," and he declares that "the Lord hath sent me to Jericho," Elisha will not leave him. At Jericho, it is known that Elijah is going home, even that very day. "Tarry here," cries Elijah to Elisha, "for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan." "I will not leave thee," cries Elisha, with a solemn oath. They stand by the river. Who can find a gateway in the water? Elijah has removed his mantle. He folds it, he makes it compact, and as with a rod he smites the hurrying Jordan. To right, to left, the waters fall back, and master and disciple cross Jordan's bed. He is going soon, Elisha. Make known thy parting wish! Be quick! They walk together on the other side. They talk together. What sign is there of separation? The prophets' sons are watching the two men from afar, for they know the solemn moment of parting must be near. But how will it be? Still the master and the disciple go on as if it were a daily walk. Suddenly, without any sound of echoing wheels, lo, a chariot of fire! Lo, horses of fire! It carries one instant. It catches up Elijah, and then a great gust of wind sweeps all upward like a flaming leaf of October before the autumn breeze. "My father, my father!" cries Elisha. "The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" With outstretched hands he stands looking up, but the air is quickly empty, and there is only that fluttering, downward-dropping mantle which Elisha picks up. With garments rent in his sorrow, grasping that fallen mantle, he stands once more by Jordan's waters. Is Elijah's God with him? "Where is he?" Elisha is crying, and smites the waters. Lo, the waters part, and alone Elisha goes over, that mantle the only reminder of him who a little while ago had crossed with his disciple.

B. C. 885.]

2 Kings 4. 18-37. [Commit to memory verses 32-35.]



18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, My head, my head! And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother.

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

LESSON XI. THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON.

[Sept. 13.]

21 And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God and shut the door upon him, and went out.

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.

24 Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.

25 So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Ge-ha'zi his servant, Behold, *yonder is that Shu'nam-mite* :

26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, *Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?* And she answered, *It is well.*

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet : but Ge-ha'zi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone ; for her soul *is* vexed within her : and the Lord hath hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.

28 Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

29 Then he said to Ge-ha'zi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way : if thou meet any man, salute him not ; and if any salute thee, answer him not again : and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said, *As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* And he arose, and followed her.

31 And Ge-ha'zi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child ; but *there was* neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, saying, The child is not awaked.

32 And when E-li'sha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

33 He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.

34 And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands : and he stretched himself upon the child ; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro ; and went up, and stretched himself upon him : and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Ge-ha'zi, and said, Call this Shu'nam-mite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

37 Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

General Statement

The great work of the prophet Elisha was not in miracles, nor in predictions, but in organizing and instructing the people of God who were scattered throughout Israel. For this purpose he went from place to place, gathering the faithful, teaching them the way of God, and cheering their hearts in the discouragements of an idolatrous age. Elijah's work had been to destroy Baal, Elisha's was to build up Jehovah's cause. In his journeyings there was one home among many in which he was ever a welcome guest, the house of a rich lady in Shunem, on the slope of Little Hermon, overlooking the plain of Esdraelon. Here a room had been built for him, and in it he rested while on his journeys. The lady had but one child, the son of her age, given in answer to the prophet's prayer. One day during the summer her boy was playing in the harvest field among

the reapers. A sunstroke smote him, and in a few hours he lay dead in his mother's arms. She laid him upon the prophet's bed, and hasted across the plain for the man of God. She found him sixteen miles away, at the foot of Mount Carmel. He read her sorrow in her face, and heard it in her first words, and sent his servant onward with his staff to lay it on the dead child's face. Soon the prophet came, and poured forth his mighty prayer. In the intensity of his feeling, he laid his face upon the cold face of the sleeper, lip to lip, brow to brow. The flesh grew warm, convulsive motions came, the eyes opened, and again life returns at the prophet's call. In the miracle is illustrated the divine working, by which a soul is brought from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 18. When the child was grown. From infancy to boyhood. **Went out to his father.** His father seems to be a well-meaning Israelite, but without the strength and nobility of character manifest in the mother. **To the reapers.** The wheat fields around Shunem are among the richest in Palestine.

19. My head, my head. He was probably smitten with the sunstroke, which in hot climates is often fatal. **To a lad.** Rev. Ver., "to his servant," the one in attendance upon the master of the estate. **Carry him to his mother.** The mother's arms are those in which the sick child can rest most easily. (1) *There is but One whose love surpasses a mother's.*

20. When he had taken him. The servant seems to have taken the child, while the father stayed in the field. Perhaps he did not realize the boy's danger. **He sat on her knees.** She held him in her arms, just as only a mother knows how to hold her child. **And then died.** Plainly the intention of the writer is to narrate a real death, not a swoon or an appearance of death. Either a miracle was wrought, or the narrator was deceived.

21. She went up. To the room which had been added to the house as a guest-chamber for the prophet Elisha. Vers. 10, 11. **The man of God.** This was the name by which Elisha was generally known; and it expressed the fact that he was not only "a holy man of God," but was the representative of God's will toward Israel. **Shut the door.** She left the dead child in the prophet's room, feeling, perhaps, that there, better than elsewhere, prayer for him might be answered.

22. She called unto her husband. Not even telling him that the child was dead, for her faith was strong that its life might be restored. **One of the young men.** The working men and the beasts of burden were all at work in the harvest field, and it was not easy to spare them. **Run to the man of God.** Perhaps she had heard how Elijah's prayer had brought back life to the widow's son at Zarephath, and hoped that her son might also be restored. (2) *Answers to prayer in the past are warrants for prayer in the present.*

23. Wherefore wilt thou go. Evidently he had no thought that his son was dead or in danger. **Neither**

new moon nor sabbath. The law of Moses called for special services on the opening day of each month (which began with the new moon), and on the sabbath. This sentence sheds light on the prophet's work, which was without doubt the holding of services for worship, and bringing together the people of God for fellowship. These assemblages were held on regular days, kept alive the sabbath observance, and prepared the way for the synagogue centuries later. **It shall be well.** Literally, "it shall be peace." With a heart full of trouble, such as only a mother could feel, she yet kept a calm countenance, and did not disclose her purpose.

24. She saddled an ass. Caused the ass to be saddled by the servant. **Drive and go forward.** The woman rode, and the man followed, urging the animal with the goad, according to the custom of the East. **Slack not thy riding.** The Rev. Ver. properly substitutes *the* for *thy*, which is not in the original; for the woman was riding, not the servant.

25. To mount Carmel. This range crosses Palestine from east to west south of the plain of Esdraelon. The woman's home was at Shunem, on the slope of the mountain Little Hermon. She crossed the plain and rode sixteen miles in order to reach the mountain. **Saw her afar off.** He knew from her rapid journeying at the unusual time that some special purpose had brought her. **Said to Gehazi.** Gehazi was the attendant upon Elisha, as Elisha himself had been upon Elijah. Had he possessed his master's integrity, unselfishness, and spiritual aspiration, he might have been his successor and formed one more in "the goodly fellowship of the prophets." But he was mercenary, small-souled, and lacking in spiritual insight; and he inherited only Naaman's leprosy and a name of infamy. (3) *How many throw away spiritual privileges for the sake of worldly gain, and then lose both!* **That Shunammite.** The only name used of this woman, taken from her residence at Shunem.

26. Run now. The prophet feels that she is in some trouble, but its nature is unknown. **She answered, It is well.** Her answer was the one word, "Peace," the customary greeting of the East, which was in her lips purposely vague, for she would not tell her trouble to the unsympathizing servant.

27. To the hill. One of the lower hills at the base of Mount Carmel. **Caught him by the feet.** In the Oriental manner of expressing earnest supplication. **Thrust her away.** Gehazi has no sympathy with her trouble, and deems her act an offense against his master's dignity. **Let her alone.** The insight of the prophet is deeper; and he perceives that she is in sorrow. **The Lord hath hid it.** Prophets were not omniscient; and could not read the thoughts of people. Only on rare occasions was knowledge imparted to them supernaturally. (4) *Troubled hearts should have encouragement and sympathy.*

28. Did I desire a son? Her broken words and agonized manner reveal her trouble to the prophet; or the conversation may have been longer than is here related. **Do not deceive me.** These had been the Shunammite's words, when the prophet first made known to her God's will that she should have a son. The promise seemed too great for her to believe it.

29. Then he said. Either the revelation of the child's death came at that moment, or he inferred the fact from her words and manner. **Gird up thy loins.** When in haste, the loose garments were tucked into the girdle, leaving the lower limbs free for walking. **Take my staff.** Perhaps he gave this emblem of his office to the servant, expecting that he would be the agent in working the miracle; perhaps he merely sent it on in advance of his own coming.

30. As the Lord liveth. A form of oath used on the most solemn occasions. **I will not leave thee.** The mother was not content with the staff and the servant. She must have the prophet's presence. **He arose and followed her.** Yielding not only to the mother's will, but also to the inner voice of the Spirit. (5) *Not the staff of office, but the soul of devotion and sympathy, is requisite for work in God's cause.*

31. Neither voice nor hearing. The cold heart and the cold staff were powerless to give life. **The child is not awaked.** He did not mean in these words

to declare that the child was sleeping and not dead, for it is customary in all languages to speak of death as a sleep. Twice in this lesson we find the child distinctly spoken of as dead.

32, 33. When Elisha was come. It was a journey of sixteen miles, and may have taken four hours. **Shut the door.** Not even the mother was present while the prophet called upon God. (6) *The most earnest prayer must be in secret.* **Prayed unto the Lord.** "This staff of his was long enough to reach up to heaven, to knock at those gates, yea, to wrench them open."—*Bishop Hall.*

34. Lay upon the child. It is useless to endeavor to explain these acts, and make them account for the miracle. They are just what earnest feeling would prompt, but they did not bring back the child's soul. Just as Christ used various methods in his miracles, so did God's prophets, but the power was from God, and not in the methods. There may be in these acts some spiritual lessons, as, (7) *Spiritual life comes from the personal contact of a living, earnest soul with the dead souls around.* (8) *So Christ places himself in contact with a dead world, and it springs to life.*

35. Walked in the house. In earnest feeling, while awaiting the answer to his prayer. **Stretched himself upon him.** Repeating his prayer and his warm contact. **Child sneezed.** The first effect of returning life would be the contraction of particular muscles, especially those in the delicate organs of the face. **Opened his eyes.** The life had now fully come back to the dead body. (9) *See in all this a strong picture of a soul entering into the new life of the Gospel.*

36, 37. He called Gehazi. Who was outside the room. **Call this Shunammite.** She may have been in her own apartment, absorbed in prayer. **Take up thy son.** One glance at the opened eyes, and she knew that the life had been restored. **Fell at his feet.** Showing her gratitude even before she shows her maternal love.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The Shunammite's son. 2 Kings 4. 18-37
 Tu. The oil multiplies. 2 Kings 4. 1-7.
 W. A son born. 2 Kings 4. 8-17.
 Th. The deadly pottage. 2 Kings 4. 38-44.
 F. Christ's resurrecting power. Luke 7. 11-23.
 S. A healing faith. Luke 7. 36-50.
 S. Paul's power over death. Acts 20. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I am the resurrection, and the life. John 11. 25.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 1099.

Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old
 Was strong to heal and save;
 It triumphed o'er disease and death,
 O'er darkness and the grave.
 Be thou our great Deliverer still,
 Thou Lord of life and death;
 Restore and quicken, soothe and bless,
 With thine almighty breath.
 To hands that work, and eyes that see,
 Give wisdom's heavenly lore,
 That whole and sick, and weak and strong,
 May praise thee evermore.

TIME.—Uncertain, but probably about B. C. 885.

PLACES.—1. Shunem, three miles north of Jezreel;
 2. Mount Carmel.

RULERS.—Jehoram, son of Ahab, ninth King of Israel; another Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, fifth King of Judah; Ben-hadad II., King of Syria; Tiglath-adur II., King of Assyria.

CONNECTING LINK.—While Elisha was passing through the land, teaching the people, he was entertained by a rich lady of Shunem. He promised that God would give her a son, and it came to pass.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The resurrection.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Child and the Mother, v. 18-21.**
 What was the cause of the child's illness?
 What did the mother do with the dead body?
- 2. The Mother and the Prophet, v. 22-31.**
 Why did the husband think her errand strange?
 Why did the mother keep the matter to herself?
 What was her answer to Gehazi's questions?
 What confidence did this show?
 Upon what mission was Gehazi sent?
 Why did it fail?
- 3. The Prophet and the Child, v. 32-37.**
 What word did Gehazi bring back?
 How did the prophet restore the child's life?
 How was the faith of both prophet and mother honored?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That the friendship of a good man is invaluable?
2. That it is well with the righteous?
3. That the fervent, effectual prayer availeth much?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Child and the Mother, v. 18-21.**
 What child is here spoken of?
 What visit did the child make?
 Of what did he complain to his father?
 Where was he sent?
 How long did his sickness last?
- 2. The Mother and the Prophet, v. 22-31.**
 Where did the mother place the dead boy?
 What did she request of her husband?
 Where did she find the prophet?
 Whom did the prophet send forward to meet her?
 What message did the servant bear?
 What was the mother's answer?
 What instructions did Elisha give his servant?
 What did Elisha and the mother do?
 What was the result of Gehazi's errand?
 What report did he make?
- 3. The Prophet and the Child, v. 32-37.**
 What did the prophet find?
 What help did he seek?
 What did he do to the child?

What signs of life were shown ?
To whom was it restored ?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—1. That death comes to the young as well as the old ? 2. That God is the only refuge in trouble ? 3. That out of our greatest griefs may come our greatest joys ?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

When Elisha was in Shunem who was very kind to him ? **A good and rich woman who was called the Shunammite.**

How did she show her kindness ? **By making him a little room.**

What did God give her in return ? **All the little boy she ever had.**

While he was out in the harvest field one day what did he cry out ? **"My head! my head!"**

Where was he carried ? **Home to mother, and she held him until noon, when he died.**

What did she do with his dear little body ? **Carried it up stairs and put it on Elisha's bed.**

Did she tell his father that he was dead ? **No; she only told him she wanted to go at once to the man of God.**

When she came in sight of Elisha what did he know ? **That she was in trouble.**

When he knew what the trouble was what did he do ? **Sent his servant in haste to lay his staff upon the little face.**

Was the mother contented with this ? **No; she said, "As the Lord lives, I will not leave you until you go too."**

When they came to the door what did the servant say ? **"The child is not awaked."**

What did Elisha do after he had shut the door and prayed ? **He put his hands and face upon the little boy's hands and face.**

After he had done the same thing again, what happened ? **The boy sneezed, and opened his eyes.**

What did that happy mother do when she saw her boy alive ? **She fell at Elisha's feet.**

Words with Little People.

Our Golden Text, to-day, contains the most precious news in all the Bible. Jesus died for us on the cross. He was buried, *but he did not stay dead.* He came to life again so that he could be our *Life from the dead* as well as our *Saviour.* If he had not risen, then we, when we die, should never be alive again, but *now we shall be,* and when Jesus raises us, we shall never, never die again, but we shall live in a body that will never be sick or tired, in a beautiful, heavenly home, *forever and forever.*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What happened to the Shunammite's son ? **He died.**
2. What did his mother do with him ? **Laid him on Elisha's bed.**
3. What did she then do ? **Went to Elisha to Mount Carmel.**
4. When Elisha had gone into the room where the child was what did he do ? **"Prayed unto the Lord."**
5. When the child had opened his eyes what did Elisha say to the mother. **"Take up thy son."**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Way to Save the Children.

I. PARENTAL SOLICITUDE.

1. *She....came unto the man of God.* v. 25.
"Come unto me...heavy laden." Matt. 11. 28.
2. *Soul....weaved within her.* v. 27.
"Great heaviness and continual sorrow." Rom. 9. 2.
3. *Do not deceive me.* v. 28.
"Thou hast caused me to hope." Ps. 119. 49.

II. PERSISTENT FAITH.

1. *Is it well with the child ?* v. 26.
"Well with them that fear God." Eccl. 8. 12, 13.
2. *Is it well ?* v. 26.
"He hath done all things well." Mark 7. 37.
3. *As the Lord liveth.* v. 30.
"I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job 19. 25.
4. *I will not leave thee.* v. 30.
"I beseech thee, look upon my son." Luke 9. 38.

III. POWERLESS CEREMONY.

1. *Lay my staff upon the face of the child.* v. 29.
"It is the Spirit that quickeneth." John 6. 63.
2. *The child is not awaked.* v. 31.
"Thy disciples....could not cure him." Matt. 17. 16.

IV. POTENTIAL PRAYER.

1. *Prayed unto the Lord.* v. 33.
"The prayer of faith shall save." James 5. 15.
2. *Stretched himself upon the child.* v. 34.
"Imparted unto you....our own souls." 1 Thess. 2. 8.
3. *The child opened his eyes.* v. 35.
"Being dead....hath he quickened." Col. 2. 13.
4. *She....took up her son.* v. 37.
"This my son was dead, and is alive." Luke 15. 24.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

A Christian Mother.

Notice the following traits of character in the Shunammite woman :

1. Though the wife of a rich man, evidently the leading mind in the household, and full of earthly cares, she was interested in spiritual things ; a good example for ladies of high social position.
2. She was generous toward God's cause, and helpful toward God's workers ; not grudging her house-room, but giving welcome to a man of God. See how her hospitality was rewarded !
3. She was quick to appreciate religion and its influence in the home. Notice how clearly she saw the character of Elisha, sympathized with it, and welcomed its presence in her dwelling. v. 9.
4. She was humble, though rich, not ambitious of great things, but contented with her place. v. 13.
5. She appreciated childhood, and welcomed God's gift of a son, not (as some to-day) counting it a burden. v. 14-17.
6. She possessed strong faith, believing that God could even bring back her child from the dead.
7. She was an attendant upon the public means of grace, going regularly to worship among God's people. v. 23.

English Teacher's Notes.

THERE is an old classical fable of a man on whom was conferred the gift of immortality, but without that of perpetual youth. The unfortunate Tithonus grew old and decrepit, and longed earnestly for death to relieve him of his worn-out body ; but death came not. Such immortality, if it were possible, would be a poor thing. Such life, if life it may be called, would not be worth having. In a world where sin has entered, a world subject to disease and decay, the death of the body is an actual mercy. But it is the few who know any thing of the gradual decay of age. Earthly life, as a rule, comes far short of the space allotted to it. It is not only a perishing thing, but a precarious thing, ex-

posed to a thousand dangers, and liable at any moment to sudden and speedy destruction. We have in the passage for to-day

A striking picture of earthly life.

There is the harvest field belonging to the rich man of Shunem. Few things are more suggestive of plenty, peace, gladness, and stirring activity. The ripe yellow corn is falling beneath the sickle of the busy reapers, to be stored up in the barns standing ready to receive the treasure. The master is there, moving about, like Boaz (Ruth 2. 4), with words of cheer and kindly greeting. The gleaners are gathering up the scattered ears, which, all too precious to be lost, fall to the share of the poor and needy. And a child is there, a bright, happy boy, full of frolic and glee, watching as the golden sheaves fall, chatting merrily with the reapers, and making the air ring with his joyous laughter. The bright summer sunshine falls on the young head, but the rays are too fierce; the child suddenly turns with a cry of pain to his father; he is carried home to his mother; in a few short hours all is over, the earthly life has fled.

What a contrast! Outside the busy harvest fields, inside the little chamber, the bed, the childish form lying on it still and cold in death. But, in different settings, such a picture is constantly being reproduced: "In the midst of life we are in death." Such is earthly life: "A vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Jas. 4. 14.

But there is

A true life.

Look at the mother, the lady of Shunem, as she hastens away to Carmel to seek the prophet Elisha. "Her soul is vexed within her," for it is hard to lose the gift so unexpectedly bestowed, the one, only dearly loved child. Yet it is not the grief of hopeless despair; it is not a grief without solace. There is surely a deep meaning in the "well," or, literally, "peace," with which she answers both the question of her husband and the inquiries of Gehazi. Granted that she wished to conceal from the former the blow which had fallen upon them, and that to the latter she would not confide her trouble, we cannot believe that she deliberately told an untruth when asked concerning the child's welfare. For her, even in such sorrow as this, there was "peace;" for the child whose career had been thus suddenly cut short, there was peace. For this earthly life was not all. Every pious Israelite knew that he possessed something better—a life which the grave could not touch, a life inviolate, unperishing. Thus David looked right across the gulf of death that had come between him and his child, saying, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12. 23); and again, meditating on the shortness of earthly life, he says: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me." Psa. 49. 15.

But the grave was not this time to keep its prey. The passage shows us

A resurrection.

Just as an earnest of immunity from the touch of death was given in the translation of Enoch and

Elijah, so was an earnest of victory over death given in the miracles wrought by Elijah and Elisha in raising the dead. Very similar are the two instances. In both cases there was prayer, and there was the actual close contact with the lifeless body. But in the case of the Shunammite's child we have the fuller and more perfect picture. The staff of the prophet has no power. But after the earnest supplication has gone up on high, the living, breathing form is stretched upon the lifeless one, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands; and the life conquers, the soul returns, the body revives, the earthly life is restored.

This is the way death is conquered. It is the life of Christ which raises the dead soul, and the resurrection of Christ which raises the dead body. He is "the resurrection and the life."

But the resurrection of the Shunammite son was to earthly life, the life that must again fade away and perish, the life that might, like Tithonus in the fable, wither up and be turned into the likeness of death, even while the final stroke lingered. But there is coming

A better resurrection.

Before the great translation (see last lesson) comes, the grave must give up the dead who have died "in the Lord."

But to have the resurrection and the life, we must have Christ. The youngest may be cut off suddenly; but the life of the youngest may be "hid with Christ in God." Col. 3. 8. And though we look for no restoration of the earthly life, like the Shunammite's son, we look for a joyful resurrection to a full and perfect life, nevermore to feel the touch of change, severance, or decay, through him who declared: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

The Shunammite's Son. 2 Kings 4. 18-37.

1. "And when the child was grown." The divine order of development. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the year." Mark 4. 28; Eccl. 3. 1, 11; 2 Pet. 3. 18; Psa. 92. 12; Eph. 2. 21.

2. "My head, my head." The providence of sickness. "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal." Deut. 32. 39; 2 Sam. 12. 15; Acts 12. 23; Psa. 91. 8-7; Isa. 58. 2, 3.

3. "Carry him to his mother." The natural, instinctive order of paternal wisdom and tenderness. "Can a woman forget her sucking child?" Isa. 49. 15; 66. 13; Exod. 2; 1 Sam. 1. 22; 1 Kings 3. 26; 2 John.

4. "He sat on her knees till noon, and then died." Our dearest love and tenderest care often avail not to save from death our darlings. "And David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth." 2 Sam. 12. 16; Heb. 12. 6; Psa. 66. 11; Job 11. 10; 1 Sam. 3. 18.

5. "And laid him on the bed of the man of God." How naturally, indeed instinctively, in affliction men seek aid from God through one of his consecrated instrumentalities. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." Jas. 5. 16; Prov. 15. 8; Joel 2. 17; 1 Pet. 3. 12; Acts 6. 8.

6. "That I may run to the man of God." Instinctively the man of God is known to represent divine power. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did

great wonders and miracles among the people." Acts 6. 8; Neh. 1. 10; 2 Chron. 16. 9; Matt. 17. 20; Heb. 13. 5.

7. "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day?" God's grace is promised in our times of need regardless of ceremonial regularity. "And find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4. 16; John 7. 37; Matt. 11. 28; Rev. 22. 17; Acts 17. 30.

8. "Drive." The work of God must not be delayed. "So run that ye may obtain." 1 Cor. 9. 24; Heb. 4. 11; Acts 9. 38; Luke 12. 19; Isa. 32. 9.

9. "So she went and came to the man of God." The natural and urgent demand of the soul for a Mediator, intercessor. "He wondered that there was no intercessor." Isa. 59. 16; Jer. 7. 16; 1 Tim. 2. 1; Gal. 3. 20; Deut. 5. 5.

10. "Is it well with the child?" The tenderness of godly solicitude. "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted." Eph. 4. 32; Jas. 5. 11; Rom. 12. 10; Ruth 1. 8; Neh. 9. 17.

11. "It is well." God's will is always best. "Thy will be done." Matt. 6. 10; Acts 21. 14; Psa. 37. 7; 46. 10; Rom. 11. 33.

12. "Let her alone." Justice never condemns without knowledge. "Send her away; for she crieth after us." Matt. 15. 23. 24; 19. 14; Deut. 16. 18; Phil. 4. 8; Mark 10. 14.

13. "Did I desire a son?" Why, O why, was my poor heart thus broken? "All things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. 8. 28; Psa. 46. 1. 2; Heb. 12. 6, 12; Nah. 1. 7; Jer. 31. 14.

14. "And lay my staff upon the face of the child." To show that God uses means to accomplish his will. The prophet's staff touched by God's power might be remedial or restorative. "And he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." John 9. 1-7; Luke 5. 4-6; Acts 27. 22-31; Matt. 9. 12.

15. "I will not leave thee." Persistency is spiritual genius. "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing." 2 Thess. 3. 13; Gen. 32. 26; Luke 18. 1-5; 1 Cor. 15. 58.

16. "And he arose and followed her." Her faith was triumphant in this great test. "The trying of your faith worketh patience." Jas. 1. 3; 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7; Heb. 11. 17; Zech. 13. 9; Rev. 3. 10.

17. "The child is not awaked." Its sleep was that of death; its restoration to life was miraculous. "And the soul of the child came unto him again, and he revived." 1 Kings 17. 22, 23; 2 Kings 13. 21; Matt. 9. 18, 25; Luke 7. 12-15; John 11. 11-44.

18. "And prayed unto the Lord." To pray is to ask God for what you *think* you need, and to *get* his will. "Moses and Aaron called upon the Lord, and he answered them." Psa. 99. 6; 119. 58, 145; Luke 22. 42; Gen. 32. 26; Heb. 4. 16.

19. "Then he returned." Persistency, importunity, in prayer, is rewarded. "Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will." Luke 11. 8, 9; 18. 9-7; 1 Thess. 3. 10; James 5. 17; Psa. 40. 1; Eph. 6. 18.

20. "The child opened his eyes." To secure the will of God is the highest, fullest possible answer to prayer. "Laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Col. 4. 12; Rom. 1. 10; 8. 27; Dan. 4. 35; Eph. 1. 5, 9; Matt. 6. 9, 10.

21. "Take up thy son." God convinces men of his power and tenderness by evidence they cannot dispute. "Women received their dead raised to life again." Heb. 11. 35; Acts 15. 8; 1 John 5. 10; John 4. 46-53; Luke 5. 17-25.

22. "And fell at his feet." In renewed and grateful

submission to the prophet's God. "Submit yourselves therefore to God." James 4. 7; 1 Cor. 15. 57; Psa. 50. 14; 106. 1; 136. 2, 3; Neh. 11. 17.

23. "And took up her son and went out." The victory of faith had again been won, and may still be repeated. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5. 4; Isa. 25. 8; 1 Cor. 15. 54; Mark 16. 16; John 2. 15, 16.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Either read, or have the class read, the whole story of this woman, beginning with verse 8....Call attention to her pure and noble character, as shown in verses 8, 9, 13, 23, 30. (See Additional Practical Lessons.).... Draw a map, showing Shunem, Carmel, the woman's journey, and the prophet's....Describe the Oriental customs of riding, salutation, beds, etc., as shown in this lesson....Show from this lesson how spiritual life is imparted to souls dead in sin: 1.) By earnest parents; 2.) By earnest prayer; 3.) By personal contact (not the staff, but the man, mouth to mouth, hand to hand); 4.) By persistent endeavor....Show in this the picture of a soul's salvation....Are you a Gehazi, content with "staff-service," or an Elisha, with personal power from personal holiness?...Has this lesson taught for the many mothers whose children die in their arms, but do not come back to them? Are their prayers answered? Yes, when they meet them in heaven, the years of their waiting will seem less to their thought than the hours of the Shunammite's child in death.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 22: Ladies riding, 334. Ver. 23: Times of public instruction, 335. Vers. 26, 29: Formal salutations, 336, 767. Ver. 29: The girdle, 314.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus, the Lord of Life.* Teachers will need no help in making this story attractive to the little ones. It cannot be otherwise. Some simple blackboard helps may be used in telling the story to hold the eyes and make the story more life-like. It is always best to have whatever is used covered until the time comes to show it. The simple furnishings of the prophet's chamber may be drawn, or cut from paper and pinned to the board; a picture of a little boy, a picture of the prophet and the prophet's staff, etc. It is wonderful how the attention of the child will be held by the expectation of seeing something that is out of sight! Three prominent lessons may be drawn from this story, which would better be enforced while teaching the lesson story.

THE BEAUTY OF FAITH.

The rich, kind woman believed in Elisha's God. This led her to be kind to Elisha, to make him welcome to her home, to take pleasure in preparing a room for him. Teach that faith in God makes us kind to God's children and thoughtful of every thing which God has made. Talk about the beauty of a loving spirit which always tries to help and never to harm. Illustrate by the rose and the nettle.

THE POWER OF FAITH.

Teach that faith makes us look to God for help in time of trouble. Faith makes us do what we can, and then trust to God. The mother did all she could for her sick boy, and when he died she went to bring the prophet. It was Elisha's faith which made him go where

the dead child lay, and pray so earnestly that God would make him alive again. Show that Elisha had not power to raise the dead, but he had faith in God, who has all power.

THE REWARD OF FAITH.



When the sorrowful mother received her child, alive and well, she had the reward of her faith. Teach that God always sees if there is real faith in the heart, and he always rewards such faith. Teach that faith grows in the heart, if we keep our hearts open toward God. Show a seed, a plant, a tree. The tree grew from the tiny seed. We need to get the little seeds of faith in our hearts, and water them by prayer and kind deeds, and then God will make them grow into strong, useful trees.

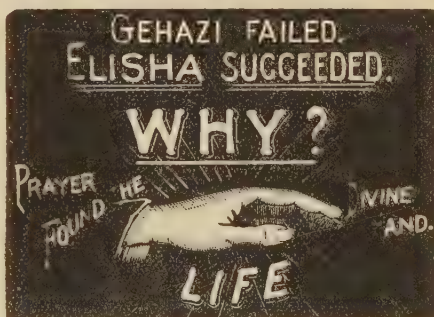
Lesson Word-Pictures.

It is the time of harvest, and through the golden grain move the reapers. The father's heart rejoices in this sunny picture of prosperity. Suddenly, across this bright harvest-land, falls a shadow. There is a cry of pain from his boy at his side, "My head! my head!" and at once he is carried to the mother. With his return, what a shadow comes into the house! She holds him in her arms, she ministers to him, but the shadow deepens, and at noon it has the blackness of death. With a breaking heart, she carries her boy up the stairs that mount to the little chamber built for the man of God, lays the lad on the bed, and then mounts her ass and is gone. She must find the man of God. Let the servant hasten. They reach Carmel. Elijah's servant, Gehazi, runs to meet her. "Is it well," he is asking, "with the child?" "It is well." Well, and that death-shadow darkening the home? She hurries on. She reaches the man of God. She throws herself at his feet. She clings to them. She lifts her pitiful face to his that looks back in wonder. "Let her alone!" says the prophet to Gehazi, who would thrust her away. Then she makes her touching complaint. Hurry, Gehazi! Gird up thy loins. Take the prophet's staff. Speak to none, and heed none that would speak to thee. Gently lay the staff on the face of the child. By it, drive away the shadow of death on the home. No, no, she pleads. He must go, not Gehazi, but Elijah. Not a stick of wood but a living soul must touch into life the dead body. "As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee," she cries. In her lives the spirit of the dead patriarch who would not let the angel go. But Gehazi has reached the stair-way to the little chamber. He opens the door. He enters curiously, wonderingly, and lays the staff on the dead child's face. There is no more response to it than when the sun steals in and tries to lay a golden crown on that young brow, or when the wind whispers at the window, softly, "Awake!" Dead, dead, and the grim shadow drives out the sunshine.

And now I hear another step on the stair-way. It is heavy and slow and toilsome, like the step of a man under a burden. It is coming nearer and nearer. I seem to hear weary sighs, as if forced from him by that heavy shadow oppressing him in pain. He opens the door and closes it. He steps to the couch that has given him such peaceful rest, and looks in tears upon the face of one who is in deeper sleep than ever visited the prophet. And he to be the one that shall awake the child out of sleep! Alone with death, and yet alone with God! O the outcries of the prophet's soul as he takes hold of God and will not let him go! The prophet bows himself on the child. With his mouth he touches the child's mouth, with his eyes the child's eyes, with his hands the child's hands. It is life at the gates of death, pressing in, eager to reach the soul imprisoned, fettered there, and bring it back. And the child—comes back! O that thrill in the prophet's soul, when there is warmth, when there is motion, when the eyes open and recognize him! And O happy mother, when the prophet tells Gehazi to summon her and she enters the chamber! She bows at the prophet's feet in all the tumult of her gratitude. She lifts her child and carries him away as if she had found wings and not a burden. The cloud has rolled away and the light of a resurrection-day fills the house, and entering a mother's heart makes it a temple luminous with the spirit of praise.

Blackboard.

BY J. E. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Make the word "WHY" quite prominent. Why did Gehazi fail, and why did Elisha succeed? Bring out the points of the lesson by questions. Leave off the sentence, "Prayer found the Divine hand," if you wish, and write it at the close of the review. The Master is the only one who commanded life to enter the dead. Man can only pray for the divine power.

ANOTHER BLACKBOARD DESIGN. Draw a door and a large key. Write "Death" on the door, and "Prayer" on the key. It was the key of prayer that unlocked the door of death.

SUGGESTION. If you cannot draw a hand, place your own, flat against the board, and trace lines around it with a fine-pointed piece of chalk.

B. C. 894.]

LESSON XII. NAAMAN THE SYRIAN.

[Sept. 20.]

2 Kings 5. 1-16.

[Commit to memory verses 10-14.]



little maid; and she waited on Na'a-man's wife.

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3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Sa-ma'ri-a! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

4 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Is-ra-el.

5 And the king of Syr'i-a said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Is-ra-el. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Is-ra-el, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, be-

hold, I have *therewith* sent Na'a-man my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Is'ra-el had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, *Am I God*, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 And it was so, when E-li'sha the man of God had heard that the king of Is'ra-el had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Is'ra-el.

9 So Na'a-man came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of E-li'sha.

10 And E-li'sha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jor'dan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11 But Na'a-man was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 *Are not Ab'a-na and Phar'par, rivers of Da-mas-cus, better than all the waters of Is'ra-el? may I not wash in them, and be clean?* So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some great thing*, wouldest thou not have done *it*? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jor'dan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that *there is no God in all the earth, but in Is'ra-el*: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, *As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none.* And he urged him to take *it*; but he refused.

General Statement.

Perhaps there is no story of the Old Testament which has been read oftener than this of Naaman's leprosy and his healing. We see the great captain riding in state through the streets of Damascus, yet envied by none and pitied by all, because of his living death as a leper. We hear the simple words of the Israelite maiden, which cast a beam of hope into his troubled heart. We watch the stately caravan, marching across the uplands of Bashan and across the Jordan valley, not for war, but to offer rich rewards to the one who shall give health. We behold the paleness of terror come across the king of Israel as he reads the strange message, calling upon him to do a work which none but God can accomplish. We mark the calm and confident words of the prophet as he bids the affrighted king send the embassy to one

who can show them that there is a God in Israel. Again the procession winds its way among the hills, and again it pauses, this time before a lowly home. From its closed door comes the brief command to wash in Jordan seven times as the condition of cure. The Syrian nobleman has thought out a better plan for the miracle, and gives way to childish passion when he cannot have his way. But better counsels prevail; he bathes in the sacred stream, and soon, renewed in flesh and in spirit, he stands, humble and grateful, before the prophet. The miracle has a twofold application: one purpose to show what sin is, and how it can be taken away; and a deeper purpose, long afterward developed by the Great Teacher, to show that God's plans of salvation are not limited to the Israelite race, but reach all mankind.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. Naaman. He is mentioned only in this chapter, and though he was one of the great men of his own time, yet his name would be unknown but for this record. (1) *How small and transient is earthly honor!* **Captain of the host.** Next to the throne itself, the most important station in the realm. **King of Syria.** Probably Ben-hadad II. Syria was situated north of Palestine, between the Lebanon range and the great desert, and was the great rival of Israel. **Great.... and honorable.** One word refers to his rank, the other to the regard of the king. **Deliverance unto Syria.** Rev. Ver., "victory unto Syria." This may have been in the wars between Syria and Israel, or, as the monuments would indicate, in an Assyrian war, in which the Syrians gained independence. **But he was a leper.** All his honors were as nothing to that "but." There were two kinds of leprosy, both incurable, but only one necessarily fatal. The disease was hereditary; was believed to be contagious; was deceptive from its painless character; rendered a man unclean, so that none could come near him; and was absolutely incurable. Under the strict law of Israel Naaman would have been deposed and excluded from society, but the Syrians were less careful. (2) *What a perfect picture of the disease of sin!*

2. Syrians had gone out. There was a chronic condition of petty conflict between Israel and Syria, varied by an occasional truce, or by a general war. **By companies.** In little marauding parties, to plunder rather than to offer legitimate war. **Brought away captive.** War, always barbarous, was in ancient times far more cruel than now. Prisoners were generally killed, especially the aged, the wounded, and the useless; and all who were worth keeping were enslaved. **A little maid.** This little captive became an important link in a chain of events. Note in this incident, 1.) Her forgiving, generous spirit toward her captors; 2.) Her fidelity, even in a lowly condition; 3.) Her sympathy for the trouble of others; 4.) Her simple faith. (3) *How much good even a child can do!* (4) *Trouble sometimes may open the way to usefulness.*

3. She said. (5) *See the power of a child's word for good!* **The prophet that is in Samaria.** Not the city of Samaria, but the country to which it had given a name. **He would recover him.** Perhaps he had healed other lepers; or his fame as a wonder-worker was known.

4. 5. One went in. Perhaps it would be better to read, "he [that is, Naaman] went in." **Told his lord.**

Ben-hadad the king. **Go to.** An exclamation like our "Come, now." **I will send a letter.** A king's letter, a captain's journey, a stately procession, a priceless present, all the result of a little child's word. (6) *Let us be careful of our words, and speak such as will do good.* **Talents.... pieces of gold.** The treasure has been variously estimated at from twenty to sixty thousand dollars. **Changes of raiment.** Garments are changed frequently among wealthy Orientals, so that many suits are needed.

6. The king of Israel. Perhaps Jehoram, the son of Ahab. **That thou mayest recover him.** Himself an absolute ruler, he supposed that the king of Israel could command his subjects at will; and he considered it quite a complimentary way of expressing his desire that the king would use his influence to effect the cure.

7. Rent his clothes. An Oriental gesture, expressive of sorrow, alarm, and terror. (7) *Kings have all the troubles of common men.* **Am I God.** Then there were some things that a king of Israel would admit that he could not do; and there was, after all, a God in Israel who could bring to life. **Send unto me.** He did not understand the true purpose of the letter, which was a request and not a command, though couched in lordly language. **He seeketh a quarrel.** He supposed that as Ben-hadad had made impossible demands upon his father Ahab, in order to provoke a war, so his successor was now doing with like purpose. A closer intimacy with "the man of God" might have lessened his alarm.

8. Elisha the prophet. The monarch was a slave, the captain was worse off than a beggar, and the man of God is the only king in this chapter. **Let him come now to me.** Spoken not in arrogance, but under divine direction, and with a consciousness of almighty aid. **There is a prophet in Israel.** One who could speak and act for God among men.

9. Naaman came. A contrast: Naaman with princely retinue, and underneath his dazzling robe a leper's skin and an aching heart; Elisha, in humble surroundings, yet swaying a scepter mightier than a king's. **His horses for his attendants, and his chariot for himself.** (8) *The seeming is not always the real.* **The house of Elisha.** Where it was is not known.

10. Elisha sent. He did not honor the haughty Syrian by his presence, but sends his commands by a

servant; thus respecting the ceremonial law, showing the dignity of his office, and humbling Naaman's pride. **Go and wash in Jordan.** 1.) A simple act; 2.) A self-denying act; 3.) An act of obedience; 4.) An act of perseverance; 5.) An act of faith; 6.) A symbolic act, showing as in a picture the process of salvation. **Flesh shall come again.** In leprosy, the flesh decays and falls away in running sores; and the cure consists in the renewal of the flesh.

11. Naaman was wroth. His pride was touched, that he, a Syrian nobleman, should be treated no better than an outcast among the Israelites. (9) *Pride keeps many from eternal life.* Behold, I thought. He had already planned an impressive way of healing, and he expected the Lord and the prophet to come to his plan. Just so there are many now who are willing to be saved, but unwilling to "kneel at an altar," or confess that they have been sinners. **The name of the Lord his God.** Literally, "of Jehovah his God." He knew that Jehovah was the God of Israel, just as Rimmon was of Syria, and Chemosh of Moab. **Over the place.** Showing that the leprosy had been recently manifested, and as yet touched only a part of the body.

12. Abana and Pharpar. The *Barada* and the *Awaj*, two crystal streams rising in Mount Lebanon and flowing across the plain of Damascus, only to be lost in the desert; fit types of the worldly morality, cold ceremonialism, and intellectual culture, which men would substitute for the old Gospel of salvation. **Damascus.** The capital of Syria, and one of the most ancient cities in the world; so beautiful when seen at a distance that Mohammed refused to enter it, saying, "Man can have but one paradise, and mine is not on the earth!" **Went away in a rage.** How foolish is that rage which makes a man turn away from purity and

life, just because its conditions are not of his own choosing! (10) *Naaman has left many descendants in the world.*

13. His servants. They knew the quickness of his temper, and the real worth of his character. Well for him that he had wise advisers, and better, that he followed their advice. **Some great thing.** He would have been ready to spend a great fortune, or to take a great journey, if he could have obtained healing. **How much rather then?** So now, since it is so easy, why should any hesitate to obtain salvation?

14. Then went he down. From the mountains of Samaria to the valley and the brink of Jordan. **Dipped himself seven times.** He obeyed the command precisely, just as every sinner should do who would be saved. **Like the flesh of a little child.** What a picture of that mightier work of grace, by which the sinner becomes a new creature.

15. He returned. Like the grateful Samaritan leper in Christ's time, he turned back to give thanks. **Came and stood.** But now with new body and a new feeling. **No God in all the earth.** This does not show that Naaman was converted, in the Gospel sense, to the worship of the God of Israel. He meant that the God of Israel should be hereafter his patron-divinity. **Take a blessing.** A present, or reward, after universal Oriental custom.

16. I will receive none. Elisha would show him that the work was of grace, and not a matter of purchase; and also that God's prophets were not magicians, whose powers were at the service of a fee. The endowments of the prophet were not bestowed for his own enrichment, but for the benefit of men.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Naaman the Syrian. 2 Kings 5. 1-16.
Tv. Gehazi's punishment for sin. 2 Kings 5. 17-27.
W. Sight restored by washing. John 9. 1-25.
Th. Cleansed by God. Isa. 1. 16-27.
F. Power to heal given disciples. Matt. 10. 1-15.
S. Health restored by repentance. Job 33. 23-33.
S. Whiter than snow. Ps. 51. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Ps. 51. 7.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 319.

There is a fountain filled with blood
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
 And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
 Lose all their guilty stains.
 The dying thief rejoiced to see
 That fountain in his day;
 And there may I, though vile as he,
 Wash all my sins away.
 Thou dying Lamb! thy precious blood
 Shall never lose its power,
 Till all the ransomed Church of God
 Are saved, to sin no more.

TIME.—Supposed to be about B. C. 894.

PLACES.—1. Damascus, the capital of Syria; 2. Samaria, the capital of Israel; 3. The residence of Elisha, perhaps at Samaria; 4. The river Jordan.

RULERS.—See Lesson XI.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—Cleansing from sin.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. Naaman's Captive, v. 1-4.**
 Who was Naaman?
 Why did the king esteem him so highly?
 What was his affliction?
 How had the Hebrew maid been captured?
 What was her office in Naaman's family?
 What word did she speak which led to great results?
- 2. Naaman's Journey, v. 5-10.**
 What did the king of Syria do?
 Why did he write his letter to the king of Israel?
 Why did the king of Israel imagine it had an evil purpose?
 What was Elisha's message?

3. Naaman's Rage, v. 11-13.

Why was the captain angry?
 In what respect was he like any sinner?
 What good advice did he heed?

4. Naaman's Cure, v. 14-16.

What occurred when he obeyed the prophet?
 What effect did his healing have upon him?
 How did he show his gratitude?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That no earthly position is exempt from misfortune?
2. That a child's words may affect vast interests?
3. That doing great things saves no one?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Naaman's Captive, v. 1-4.

What was Naaman's standing with the king?
 What had given him this favor?
 With what was he afflicted?
 Who waited on Naaman's wife?
 What did she want her master to do?
 For what reason?

2. Naaman's Journey, v. 5-10.

What was told the king?
 What present did the king give to Naaman?
 On what journey did he send him?
 What request was made of the king of Israel?
 How did the king of Israel receive the letter?
 What rebuke did Elisha give the king?
 What request did he make?
 To whom did Naaman then go?
 What did the prophet direct him to do?

3. Naaman's Rage, v. 11-13.

How did Naaman receive the prophet's order?
 What had he expected?
 How did his servant rebuke him?

4. Naaman's Cure, v. 14-16.

How was Naaman finally cured?
 What did he do when healed?
 What confession did he make?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson is it shown—

1. That good service may be rendered by the humblest?
2. That there is only one right way?
3. That cleansing comes through obedience?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Naaman? A general in the Syrian army. This made him a very happy man, did it not? No; because he was a leper.

Who lived in Naaman's house? A little slave-girl who had been stolen out of the land of Israel.

What did she say to Naaman's wife one day? "The prophet in Samaria could cure my master's leprosy."

As soon as the king of Syria heard of it what did he do? Sent Naaman with a letter and many presents to the king of Israel.

How did the king feel when he read the letter? He was in great fear, and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive?"

What did he think? That the king of Syria was trying to pick a quarrel with him.

What word did Elisha send to the king? "Let him come to me."

What did Naaman do? He came with all his horses and chariots to Elisha's door.

What message did Elisha send by his servant? "Go and wash in Jordan seven times."

How did Naaman feel because Elisha did not go out to see him in all his glory? Very angry.

As he was going home in great rage what did his servants say to him? "My father, if the prophet had asked you to do some great thing you would have done it; why not this?"

Did Naaman change his mind? He did as the man of God had said, and was made pure and clean.

Where did he go? Back to Elisha's home a changed man.

What did he say? "Now I know that the God in Israel is the only God in all the earth."

Would Elisha take those splendid presents? No; he said, "As God liveth, I will receive none."

Words with Little People.

There is a sickness now, darlings, like unto leprosy. It comes in dreadful spots all over little human souls; its name is sin. But there is a *Jordan*, too, so that—

"Though your sins are red like crimson, deep in scarlet glow,

Jesus' precious blood can make them whiter than the snow."

[whole, "Precious, precious blood of Jesus, let it make you LET it flow in mighty cleansing o'er your little soul."

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What great man of Syria was afflicted with the leprosy? "Naaman, captain of the host."
2. What did the little captive maid of Israel say the prophet in Samaria would do? "Recover him of his leprosy."
3. What did Elisha tell Naaman to do? "Wash in Jordan seven times."
4. How did Naaman receive this command? "Naaman was wroth, and went away."
5. But obeying his servant's behest what did he do? Washed, and was clean.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Sin and its Cure.

I. THE LOATHSOME DISEASE.

1. Naaman.... was a great man. v. 1.
"God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10. 34.
2. But he was a leper. v. 1.
"All have sinned." Rom. 3. 23.

II. THE SIMPLE REMEDY.

1. A little.... waited on Naaman's wife. v. 2.
"Revealed.... unto babes." Matt. 11. 25.
2. Am I God.... to make alive? v. 7.
"Who can forgive sins but God?" Mark 2. 7.
3. Let him come now to me. v. 8.
"Come unto me, all ye that labor." Matt. 11. 28.

4. Go and wash in Jordan. v. 10.

"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." John 9. 7.

5. Rivers of Damascus better. v. 12.

"Forsaken.... fountain.... hewed out cisterns." Jer. 2. 13.

III. THE PERFECT CURE.

1. Then went he down. v. 14.
"Humbleth himself.... exalted." Luke 14. 11.
2. Dipped.... seven times. v. 14.
"Endureth to the end.... saved." Matt. 10. 22.
3. Flesh came again. v. 14.
"A new creature." 2 Cor. 5. 17.
4. Like.... a little child. v. 14.
"As little children." Matt. 18. 3.
5. He was clean. v. 14.
"Washed.... sanctified.... justified." 1 Cor. 6. 11.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Thoughts on Salvation.

1. The healing of this Syrian is a dim and distant foreshadowing of salvation for the Gentile world. Luke 4. 27.
2. Vast as was the treasure which Naaman brought in his train, yet it was of small value compared with the bodily soundness which he sought. And how much greater to a man is the worth of his soul's salvation! Mark 8. 36, 37.
3. We see how in salvation there are certain truths which appear utterly opposed to each other. It is not obtainable by effort, yet requires effort; it is free, yet has its price to every man; it is easy, yet hard in its demands of self-sacrifice; it humbles, yet honors every man who receives it.
4. We are not at liberty to make the cross too light and too easy. There should be no compromise with sin, and no smoothing the way of duty.
5. Naaman might have bathed in Jordan vainly without the prophet's word and God's blessing. Other lepers have since washed in its waters, only to remain polluted still. Not forms, nor rites, nor observances, but only God's power, brings the salvation of a soul.

English Teacher's Notes.

The Golden Text indicates the point around which the various lessons taught by this passage are to cluster. Our subject is washing, or cleansing, and it is presented in the story under four points of view.

1. As a needful thing.

We are so familiar with the story of Naaman that his need of cleansing seems a perfectly understood matter. But strangers who caught sight of his cortege as it passed southward on its way to Samaria, might have envied the man who sat in that chariot. He was wealthy; he was surrounded by servants ready to perform his bidding. And if they inquired who he was they would be told he was the victorious general of Syria, the king's trusted favorite. He was, moreover, if we may judge from his monarch's confidence, and from the attachment of his servants, an upright, kind-hearted man. What could such a man need? But there was one thing which spoiled his life. Of what avail were riches, honor, fame, respect, while he was a prey to the loathsome and hopeless disease of leprosy? Instead of a man to be envied, a man

who had all that heart could wish, we have before us one to be deeply commiserated, one of the neediest of the needy.

We often make mistakes in this matter; we see, as we imagine, want and poverty here, plenty and prosperity there. But could we look behind the outer veil we should see that there is one great need, universal except in those happy cases where it has been met and answered, and this is washing, cleansing from spiritual disease and spiritual defilement. We look upon a band of children, light-hearted, gay, sweet, and pleasant, as it seems. But inquire closer concerning them. One has a bad temper, and makes all at home miserable when she is there. Another cannot be trusted, another is idle, another proud and disagreeable. And even those who are called "good children" are, perhaps, forgetting God, living without him, guilty in his sight, and unforgiven. Let the teacher press home on each the question, *How is it with you?*

2. *As a simple thing.*

Naaman arrived at Samaria full of hope and of expectation. From the king of Israel he meets with no help, or even kindly direction. But as he stands at Elisha's door the message comes to him: "Go wash in Jordan." Could any thing be more simple? Here is no long pilgrimage to be undertaken, no hard course of self-mortification imposed, no toilsome works, no costly payment demanded. "Wash in Jordan:" the river is not far off; it is open to all; it is free.

So is the cleansing of the soul. It does not require wealth, learning, influence, ability to be cleansed. It is free to the pauper as to the millionaire, to the foolish as to the wise, to the little child as to the man. It is a very simple thing: wash and be clean. Not one who has ever heard the Gospel can say that it is not for him.

3. *As a hard thing.*

This simple thing was a stumbling-block to the great Syrian general. It was too humble a thing for a man of his rank and station. He expected that the prophet, in consideration of the greatness of his visitor, would come down himself to wait upon him, and perform a miracle in the sight of those around. And Naaman was willing to make handsome return for the service rendered. But to wash in Jordan—any beggar might do that! It could not be expected of him. And so he had nearly lost the cleansing, and gone home a leper, as he came.

Washing is just as hard a thing now to many. Downright wicked men want cleansing, of course; to that all will agree. But must a youth who bears an honorable name among his acquaintances, and the girl who is loved and admired by her companions, go through the same? Each one would, naturally, like to be all right in his standing before God, and his prospects for eternity; but to come to the cross of Christ as a sinner, that seems hard to him. Yet there is no other way. It is, "wash and be clean."

4. *As an efficacious thing.*

Was not Naaman a happy man when he came out of Jordan, with his whole body pure, and sound,

and healthy, "as the flesh of a little child?" He left his country a man under sentence of death; he returns to it full of life and vigor. The water of Jordan, on which he had at first looked with such disdain, has been to him "the power of God unto salvation" of his bodily life.

So with the cross of Christ, on which the pride and learning of this world look down with contempt. It is the only thing that can heal, the only thing that can save. There is the "fountain opened for sin and for all uncleanness." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

So far the application of the lesson is for those who are yet uncleansed. Is there any application for those who can say of that fountain, which cleansed the dying thief:

"There have I, though vile as he,
Washed all my guilt away?"

There is. While the cleansing was alone by the power of God, notice the part that others took in leading up to it. The captive maid was the first instrument in the Lord's hands. She was mindful of her master's great need, and lovingly and respectfully pointed out that there was a remedy. The Syrian king, though ignorant of the Power that could heal, gladly sent his favorite to seek it. The prospect pointed to the way of cleansing. The servants of Naaman realizing the gravity of the situation, interposed to allay their master's offended pride. Heathen king and servants, Israelite prophet and maiden, all had their happy share in the work. But happiest the two latter, who acted in full consciousness and understanding of the blessing. This is what the cleansed should do—mark the need of others, and strive to lead them to the fount of cleansing. Let the young imitate the little maid in her self-forgetting love, and her respectful earnestness. The passage tells no more of her. But can we doubt that she had her full and overflowing reward?

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Naaman the Syrian. 2 Kings 5. 1-16.

1. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Prayer in the beauty and effectiveness of perfect and specific confidence. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." Jas. 1. 6; Heb. 10. 22; 11. 6; Matt. 21. 22; 1 John 5. 14.

2. "By him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria." God's plan of working through instrumentalities. "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation." Isa. 10. 5; Hab. 1. 6; 2 Thess. 2. 13; Prov. 16. 9; 20. 24; Josh. 7. 14.

3. "He was a leper." Brilliant worldly fortune is often marred by extreme personal affliction. "And the priest shall look upon him, and pronounce him unclean." Lev. 13. 3; Job 16. 7-16; 2 Chron. 32. 25; 2 Sam. 12. 15-23.

4. "Out of the land of Israel a little maid." God's way of carrying the religion of Israel to the heathen through a captive slave. "And sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt." Gen. 37. 28; 41. 16; 50; Dan. 1. 3, 6; 6.

5. "Would God my lord were with the prophet which is in Samaria!" An illustration of simple, perfect, victorious faith. "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Num. 13 30; Dan. 3. 17; 6. 10, 23; Luke 7. 50; John 11. 27.

6. "And he went in, and told his lord." The "little maid" exhibited in her solicitude a divinely imposed, and so influential, spirit. "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives." Jer. 29. 7; Rom. 12. 19; Col. 3. 13; 1 Sam. 25. 14-17; Ruth 2. 4.

7. "Thus said the maid." The influence of a testimony given in simple faith. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe." Eph. 1. 19; Prov. 14. 26; Heb. 10. 35; 1 John 2. 28; 3. 21; 5. 14.

8. "Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel." A striking illustration of conviction, not by the persuasion of the "little maid," but by the Truth. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart." Acts 2. 37; Luke 15. 17; Jonah 3. 4-6; Acts 16. 29, 30; 24. 25.

9. "That thou mayest recover him of his leprosy." Think of the leprosy of sin, and its possible instantaneous cure. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isa. 1. 6; Jas. 4. 17; Prov. 15. 9; Eccl. 7. 20; Rom. 6. 18.

10. "Took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment." How natural, and yet how futile, the effort to purchase the divine favor. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2. 9; 2 Tim. 1. 9; Tit. 3. 5; Rom. 3. 20; Gal. 2. 16.

11. "See how he seeketh a quarrel against me." The accusing scourge of a guilty conscience. "He was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead." Luke 9. 7; Gen. 42. 21; 1 Sam. 24. 5; Matt. 27. 3; 2 Cor. 1. 12.

12. "Am I God to kill, and to make alive." A statement averring the utterly incurable nature of leprosy. "And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Luke 17. 12-19; Lev. 13. 14; 2 Kings 7. 8; Mark 1. 41.

13. "He shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." God does not ask us to believe in anything less than demonstration. "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Psa. 73. 26; Luke 4. 18, 19; 2 Cor. 4. 8-10, 16-18; Isa. 12. 2.

14. "Let him come now to me." From God sufferers must seek relief in person. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5. 40; 7. 37; Matt. 11. 28, 29; Ezek. 18. 20, 30; 1 Cor. 3. 13-15.

15. "Go and wash in Jordan seven times." There is from heaven no unconditional salvation. "Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord." Matt. 9. 28, 29; John 9. 7; Zech. 13. 1; Acts 16. 30, 31; Mark 16. 16.

16. "And Naaman was wroth, and went away." He wanted to be healed in his own way. "Who hath saved us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose." 2 Tim. 1. 9; Rom. 11. 6; Tit. 3. 5; Prov. 21. 4; Matt. 23. 29, 30.

17. "He will surely come out to me." How thoroughly and practically God ignores human pride. "For that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Luke 16. 15; Prov. 6. 16, 17; 1 Tim. 3. 6; 2 Kings 20. 13, 16, 17.

18. "So he turned and went away in a rage." Man

may "rage," but God in perfect composure holds to his original conditions. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16. 31; 17. 30; 2 Cor. 6. 2; Rom. 1. 16; 10. 9, 10; Matt. 10. 22.

19. "Seven times." Number of perfection. "And the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times." Josh. 6. 4; Lev. 4. 6; Dan. 9. 25; Gen. 29. 18; 1 Kings 18. 43.

20. "And he was clean." Obedience always secures healing, if not as we *desire* as we *need*. "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice." Deut. 13. 4; Exod. 23. 23; 1 Sam. 12. 14; Isa. 1. 19; Jas. 1. 25.

Berean Methods.

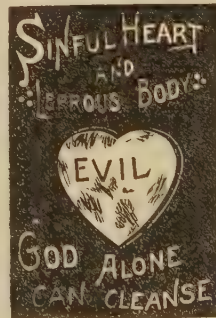
Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

In this story we cannot help tracing the analogies between the physical and spiritual worlds. I. Take *Naaman's condition* as a type of the sinner's: 1.) Hereditary; 2.) Defiling; 3.) Deceptive; 4.) Deadly.... A leading lawyer in the Sandwich Islands once overturned a lighted lamp on his hand, and was surprised to find no pain in the burned member. From that fact he learned, what no one else had suspected, that he was a leper. He gave information, but at first it could not be believed; yet after a time he was sent to "the leper's island," where he died six years after.... II. Show in *the captive's word* how "faith cometh by hearing," and how a child may point others to salvation.... III. Show *the captain's pride*, how nearly it lost him his cure, and how the same spirit keeps souls from salvation.... IV. Show *the cure*, and its conditions: 1.) Obedience; 2.) Perseverance.... V. Show *the captain's gratitude*. What shall we render to God for our salvation?

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 5: 64, 93. Ver. 5-7: Letters, 381.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Draw a heart with white chalk. Make it all white except the blotches, which represent the foulness of sin. Speak of the incurable leprosy. God alone could make the leper clean, and he alone can cleanse the heart from leprous sin.



Here is a simple design of a guide-post. On it is written, "A little girl." She pointed the way. A little girl, a little word, a little act of obedience, saved a great man from a loathsome death. What am I doing to save a soul?

A WORD IN SEASON.

WHEN DID I SPEAK IT TO CURE A SIN-SICK SOUL?

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Remedy for Sin.*

INTRODUCTORY. Tell that Naaman, the Syrian general, was honored and beloved because he had brought deliverance to his country in time of danger. Illustrate by the regard in which Gen. Washington and Gen. Grant are held by the American people. Have the word "But" printed on the board in large letters. Uncover it, and tell that though Naaman was rich and brave and beloved, he was very unhappy. Why? He was a leper. Give some idea of the loathsome disease, which little by little ate the body up! Then tell of the little Jewish girl in Naaman's house; how she came to be there; why she pitied and loved Naaman, and wanted to help him. Teach that God's children always want to help others.



Draw or pin up picture of a little girl. Around the head print with colored crayons, "A little child shall lead them." Uncover this, and tell what the little maid did to help. It was not much, but God can do a great deal with a single word spoken from a loving heart. Tell the story that follows. Show a letter pinned to the board. The king was anxious to have

Naaman cured. He thought if he sent rich presents that would help. He did not know that God's love and power cannot be bought. Tell what the prophet told the rich leper to do, and why this made Naaman angry. He was not ready to pray the prayer in the Golden Text. Have picture of a fountain on the board, and Golden Text printed in the form of a semicircle around it. Show it, and lead children to see that only God's power could make Naaman well again. Tell how his pride at last gave way, and he was made perfectly clean and well when he obeyed God.

Teach that this story means something for each child. There is a disease like leprosy now. It is called sin. Its ugly marks are on every one. Even little children show them; mention some, as ill-temper, etc. This disease always kills if it goes on, and only one Physician can cure it—that is Jesus. We have to go to him, just as Naaman had to go to Elisha, and then we must obey him, as Naaman obeyed Elisha. The sooner we go, the sooner we shall be cured. Teach that when we have found out the remedy we must tell others about it, as the little maid did.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Wanted, a bath, a bath for the spotted leper! Who will give it? Who will cleanse the great Naaman? None in all Damascus, save the king, rides in a hand-some chariot. None of all the warriors in the land can count up such victories, and none stand as far ahead in rank. But O, the leper-spots on his body! If they could be washed away, he would go all his days on foot through the streets of Damascus, and he would fall from the chief captain's place back to the rear as a soldier. What does he hear some day, in a discouraged mood perhaps, sitting in his banquet-room? A little maid has rehearsed a story to Naaman's wife in her chamber, and such a little maid, brought a captive from Jerusalem! What can she do? She only tells the wonderful story of cleansing that can be effected by a prophet in Israel. She only tells the good tidings. The story gets to Naaman and then travels to the king. Somebody in Israel can make a leper clean? Then Israel's king must see that the leper is healed. Syria will send to Israel, and at the palace-door of the latter there soon halts a chariot containing ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment! Delightful present, but—with them arrives a leper! What, Israel's king expected to heal that leper? The king rends his clothes. It is a harsh exaction. Syria seeks an occasion for quarrel. Elisha has heard of it. He sends a message to the king. "Let him come!" he cries. Naaman shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. There is a waiting retinue at the prophet's door. Poor people go there, sick people, widows, orphans, and angels, but who ever before saw there talents of silver and pieces of gold in such quantity? Amidst them all, though, rises the form of the leper. "He will surely come down to me. He will fall before my chariot," Naaman may be saying. No, the wonder-worker deigns not to come. It is only the officious, covetous Gehazi that comes shuffling forward and

delivers an imperious message, bidding Naaman wash in Jordan seven times. Naaman is mad. What? Send him off to a river? Could he not wash in Damascus' clean streams rather than in Jordan's waters? Why did not the prophet himself come out and say something mysterious, solemn, and grand over the leper? No, it is, "Go, wash." The leper grumbles fiercely, and away in his rage clatters and jolts the great captain's chariot. His servants though would like to say a word. He would have done a great thing at the prophet's command; will he not try that little remedy? His rage abates. He consents to go to the Jordan. The chariot halts by the river's bank. The water is hurrying on, hastening away as if it could not stop for a leper's bath, but Naaman wades out into the river, his servants curiously looking on. "How absurd!" he may be saying. "I will dip and then go back." No, Naaman, dip again. Would it not seem childish if Syria's great captain pettishly waded out like a boy? Hold! Dip again, Naaman, and again and again, as many times as the prophet bade thee. Dip seven times, but—what is the matter, Naaman? There is a look of wonder on his face. Is—is—his skin changing? The wonder becomes joyful certainty. His flesh has "come again like unto the flesh of a little child!" He wades back to the shore amid the exultant shouts of his servants, for Jordan has washed away his leprosy forever!

THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Sept. 27.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Lessons I, II. 1 Kings 12, 6-17, 25-33.
Th. Lessons III, IV. 1 Kings 16, 23-34; 17, 1-16.
W. Lessons V, VI, VII. 1 Kings 18, 1-46.
Th. Lesson VIII. 1 Kings 19, 1-18.
F. Lessons IX, X. 1 Kings 21, 4-19; 2 Kings 2, 1-15.
S. Lesson XI. 2 Kings 4, 18-37.
S. Lesson XII. 2 Kings 5, 1-16.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

LESSON I. *Revolt of the Ten Tribes.*—What was the young men's counsel? What was the result of the king's decision? How did this fulfill prophecy?

LESSON II. *Idolatry Established.*—In what two cities did Jeroboam set up calves of gold, and why? How did he excuse the sin? What sort of priests did he ordain?

LESSON III. *Omri and Ahab.*—How was Omri's sin characterized? Who succeeded him? What was the character of his son?

LESSON IV. *Elijah the Tishbite.*—Who suddenly appeared before Ahab, and why? Where did the prophet hide? How, in relieving a widow, was he himself relieved?

LESSON V. *Elijah Meeting Ahab.*—What good man was Ahab's officer? What did Elijah communicate through him to Ahab? How had Ahab troubled Israel?

LESSON VI. *The Prophets of Baal.*—Where was the assembly called? What was the test proposed? Did Baal's prophets succeed?

LESSON VII. *The Prophet of the Lord.*—What preparations were made? What was the answer to Elijah's prayer? What confession was made by the people?

LESSON VIII. *Elijah at Horeb.*—Why did the prophet flee? What error did he make? Who was appointed his successor?

LESSON IX. *The Story of Naboth.*—What did the king covet? What was Jezebel's plot? How was it avenged?

LESSON X. *Elijah Translated.*—Who accompanied Elijah beyond Jordan? What was Elisha's request? How was it answered?

LESSON XI. *The Shunammite's Son.*—What befell the child? To whom did the mother go, and why? What was the result of the prophet's faith?

LESSON XII. *Naaman the Syrian.*—What was Naaman's affliction? How did the child's word influence the king? How was the great man cured?

REVIEW SCHEME FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.



LESSON I. Revolt of the Ten Tribes.—From whom did they revolt? Whose evil counsel had he taken? What does the **GOLDEN TEXT** say of such? Over whom did Rehoboam still reign?

LESSON II. Idolatry Established.—What king set up idolatry among God's people? Against what divine command? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**] What excuse did he make? What did he present to the people as their gods?

LESSON III. Omri and Ahab.—In what did Omri go farther than the kings before him? Who exceeded him in wickedness? What defiant thing did he do? [Repeat the **GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON IV. Elijah the Tishbite.—What calamity to Israel was revealed to Elijah? What divine protection did he receive? To whom was he sent for help? How was she able to take care of him? [Repeat **GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON V. Elijah Meeting Ahab.—With what message was Elijah sent to Ahab? Who was afraid to announce the prophet? Of what did the king accuse the prophet? What charge did the prophet make against the king? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON VI. The Prophets of Baal.—What decision did Elijah leave to the people? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**] Between whom was a test proposed? What success had the prophets of Baal?

LESSON VII. The Prophet of the Lord.—What additional test did the prophet propose for himself? What divine testimony did he receive? What was the verdict of the people? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON VIII. Elijah at Horeb.—Whither did Elijah flee from Jezebel? Who met him there? What miraculous help had he? What favor did the prophet ask of the Lord? How did the Lord answer him? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON IX. The Story of Naboth.—Why did Ahab hate Naboth? Who caused Naboth's death? What became of the vineyard? What punishment was pronounced upon him? [Repeat **GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON X. Elijah Translated.—Who was with Elijah at his translation? [Repeat **GOLDEN TEXT.**] What token did he leave his servant? What power went with the mantle? What was the testimony of the witnesses?

LESSON XI. The Shunammite's Son.—Why did the Shunammite woman seek the prophet? How was her son restored to life? [Repeat **GOLDEN TEXT.**]

LESSON XII. Naaman the Syrian.—Of what was Naaman the victim? To whom did he apply for cleansing? What direction was given him? What followed obedience? What should be the prayer of every sinful heart? [**GOLDEN TEXT.**]

REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What are the **GOLDEN TEXTS** for this quarter:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. He that walketh— | 7. The Lord, he— |
| 2. Thou shalt have— | 8. And after— |
| 3. The way of— | 9. Thou hast sold— |
| 4. So he went— | 10. And Enoch— |
| 5. Ye have— | 11. I am the— |
| 6. If the Lord— | 12. Wash me— |

LESSON I.—What was the new king, Rehoboam, advised to do? **Speak kindly to the people and make their yoke lighter.** Because he would not do this what happened? **Ten of the tribes went by themselves and were called the kingdom of Israel or of the Ten Tribes.** What were the rest called? **The kingdom of Judah.**

LESSON II.—Who was made king of Israel? **Jeroboam.** What did he do? **Made two golden calves for the people to worship.** Where were they placed? **One at Dan on the north, the other at Beth-el on the south.**

LESSON III.—What kind of a king was Omri? **He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and was worse than all before him.** Who was king after him? **Ahab, who was worst of all.** What kind of a wife did Ahab have? **A very wicked, idolatrous woman, named Jezebel.**

LESSON IV.—Whom did the Lord send with a message to Ahab? **Elijah, a prophet.** Where did he send Elijah as soon as he had given the message?

To the brook Cherith to be fed by the ravens. Where, when the brook dried up? **To Zarephath, where a poor woman fed him from her handful of meal and little bottle of oil.**

LESSON V.—What did God next tell Elijah to do? **"Go and tell Ahab I will send rain upon the earth."** What was Ahab and Obadiah doing when Elijah went to find the king? **Looking for water for the beasts.** What did Ahab ask Elijah when he saw him? **"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"**

LESSON VI.—What did Elijah tell Ahab to do? **Gather all the people and the prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel.** What happened? **The prophets of Baal built an altar and prayed to their god to send fire.** Did he answer? **No.**

LESSON VII.—What did Elijah do? **Repaired an altar and prayed to his God to send fire.** Did he answer? **The fire came down and burned sacrifice, altar, and stones.** What did the people say? **"The Lord, he is God."** What did Elijah then do? **Prayed seven times for rain.**

LESSON VIII.—Where did Elijah go from Mount Carmel? **Into the wilderness, and sat down under a little tree.** Where did he go next? **To Mount Horeb, and hid in a cave.** What passed before him as he stood on the top of the mountain? **A whirlwind, an earthquake, a fire, and a still small voice.**

LESSON IX.—What did wicked King Ahab covet? **Naboth's vineyard.** How did he get it? **Jezebel had Naboth killed.** What message did God send to Ahab by Elijah? **"In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood."**

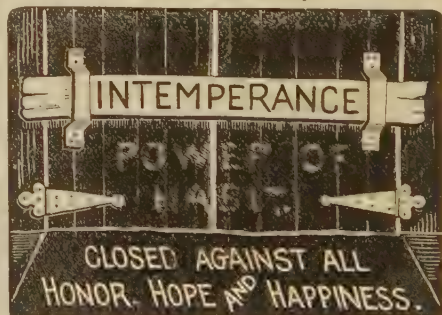
LESSON X.—Where did Elijah and Elisha go together? **To Beth-el, Jericho, and the river Jordan.** As soon as they passed over Jordan what happened? **A chariot and horses of fire parted them, and Elijah was taken in a whirlwind to heaven.**

LESSON XI.—Who took care of Elisha when he passed through Shunem? **A rich Shunammite woman.** What happened to her little boy? **He was sun-struck and died.** What did Elisha do? **Brought him to life.**

LESSON XII.—What was the matter with the great, rich, mighty man, Naaman? **He had the leprosy.** To whom did he go for healing? **Elisha.** What did Elisha tell him to do? **Wash in Jordan seven times.**

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



This temperance design represents a road-way, across which is a double door, shut and held fast by intemperance. The doors are named "The power of habit." The road-way represents the life of man, which at the beginning is open to every one to secure honor, home, happiness, and success. Intemperance swings together the heavy doors, and closes them against hope. The temperance army must batter them down. *Why let the doors close to you? It is done gradually. A little moderate drinking pushes them. A little wine-glass starts them going. You hardly see them move, but they slowly and surely come together, until the momentum is too great for your feeble strength to resist. In the very beginning march right past them to the highway of total abstinence.*

LESSONS FOR OCTOBER, 1885.

- Oct. 4. Elijah at Dothan. 2 Kings 6. 8-23.
 Oct. 11. The Famine in Samaria. 2 Kings 7. 1-17.
 Oct. 18. Jehu's False Zeal. 2 Kings 10. 15-31.
 Oct. 25. The Temple Repaired. 2 Kings 12. 1-15.

Review Service for the Third Quarter.

BY REV. H. M. SIMPSON.

Introductory Hymn. C. M.

Which of the monarchs of the earth
Can boast a guard like ours,
Encircled from our second birth
With all the heavenly powers?

Myriads of bright, cherubic bands,
Sent by the King of kings,
Rejoice to bear us in their hands,
And shade us with their wings.

Angels, where'er we go, attend
Our steps, whate'er betide;
With watchful care their charge defend,
And evil turn aside.

Superintendent. The lessons of the Third Quarter have taken into consideration twelve events which happened during the reign of the kings, beginning with the reign of Rehoboam. What three kings had reigned before Rehoboam?

School. Saul, David, and Solomon, whose son Rehoboam was.

Superintendent. How long a time were these twelve events in transpiring?

School. About ninety years, or from 975 B. C. to 885 B. C.

Superintendent. God did not wish the people to be governed by kings. When they persisted in asking for a king, what did Samuel say to them?

School. And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us. 1 Samuel viii, 10-19.

Superintendent. What important event took place while Rehoboam was king?

School. Ten of the tribes of Israel revolted, leaving only Judah and Benjamin loyal to the government.

Superintendent. What led to this revolt?

School. Discontent at the very taxes and burdens which Samuel told the people would come upon them under a kingdom, and this was followed by a rejection of their appeal to have their burdens made lighter.

Superintendent. Why did Rehoboam refuse to hear the request of the people?

School. He followed very bad advice, rejecting the counsel of old and experienced men, and listening to some young men who knew nothing about statesmanship.

Superintendent. When statesmen, or any men either in public or private life, cannot or will not distinguish between good and bad counselors, of what is it a sign?

School. Of the greatest folly. The great wisdom of Solomon consisted in many things, but partly in his ability to discriminate between good and bad men. When Solomon prayed, he said: And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing."

David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."

All sing.

C. P. M.

Be it my only wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear,
With loving gratitude:
Superior sense may I display,
By shunning every evil way,
And walking in the good.

O may I still from sin depart;
A wise and understanding heart,
Jesus, to me be given:
And let me through thy Spirit know
To glorify my God below,
And find my way to heaven.

Superintendent. State what sin Jeroboam committed, what excuse he gave for doing it, and what his real motive was.

School. He made idols of gold, and caused the people to worship them. He told the people that it would be too far for them to go to the temple at Jerusalem to worship. But he said in his heart: "If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah."

Superintendent. What common experience did the king seem to recognize in doing this?

School. That a man's religion, and especially strong religious attachments, will help him to bear a great many burdens and even to overlook many acts of injustice and oppression. Jeroboam was afraid to let the people even see their old place of worship at Jerusalem, lest it should soften their hearts.

Superintendent. What three wicked acts did Ahab do to secure the anger of God?

School. He made an altar for the worship of Baal. He married a heathen idolater named Jezebel. He rebuilt the forbidden wall about the city of Jericho.

Superintendent. By what means did God seek to reprove Ahab?

School. He sent his prophet to warn him, and also sent a great drought.

Superintendent. What does the experience of the prophet Elijah suggest as regards opportunities for doing good?

School. That whatever may be our discomfort or even peril, if we look for it we may find an opportunity to help some one weaker and more unfortunate than we are.

All sing.

C. M.

Help us to build each other up,
Our little stock improve;
Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
And perfect us in love.

Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other's cross to bear;
Let each his friendly aid afford,
And feel his brother's care.

Superintendent. What does the case of Obadiah suggest to you?

School. That a good man may serve a bad master. There were saints in Cæsar's household.

Superintendent. What resulted from Obadiah's bringing Ahab and Elijah face to face?

School. 1. A bold denial of Ahab's charge that the prophet was troublesome to Israel. 2. A terrible exposure of the folly of idolatry. 3. The destruction of four hundred and fifty of the false prophets of Baal. 4. The hatred of Jezebel who was at the bottom of much of the evil of Ahab's reign.

Superintendent. After the exciting experience of Mount Carmel, what happened to Elijah?

School. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

Superintendent. Name some causes of the prophet's sad state.

School. The intense excitement on Carmel. His dread of the wicked Jezebel. His long, weary journey. His need of food and nourishment. His unoccupied mind. His mistake in thinking that no one except himself feared God.

Superintendent. What was Elijah told to do?

School. To eat good food. To rest and get good sleep. To go to work as soon as possible. To remember that God had many others who had not bowed before the idol Baal.

Superintendent. What sins resulted in the violent death of Naboth?

School. The covetousness of Ahab. The venality of Ahab. The dishonesty and cruelty of Jezebel.

Superintendent. Name some closing events of Elijah's career.

School. He foretold the certain death of Ahaziah. He caused the destruction of two captains and a hundred men by fire. He parted the waters of Jordan by a miracle. He promised conditionally that his spirit in double measure should rest upon Elisha.

Superintendent. Name the principal persons connected with the story of the Shunammite's son, and some peculiarity of each.

School. 1. The rich great woman of Shunem, who revered and respected Elisha for the sake of his office, and wanted to entertain him because he was a holy man. 2. The good prophet Elisha, who was not willing to receive constant entertainment at his friend's home without rendering some compensation or service. 3. A thoroughly Oriental character in Gehazi, the prophet's servant. 4. The only son, delicate and beloved, but the victim of a sun-stroke in the harvest field.

Superintendent. Point out some of the actions of these persons which were exceedingly Oriental in their character.

School. 1. The generous hospitality of the Shunammite. 2. The supposition of the man of the house who thought that his wife proposed to observe a festival because he wanted to send for the prophet. 3. The act of the woman's catching hold of the prophet's feet, which was an acknowledgment of helplessness and despair. 4. The sending of the prophet's staff as a representation of himself. 5. The indication of haste manifested in the apparent though not real discourtesy of instructing the messenger to salute no one, nor return the salute of any by the way, the common salutations of the East being so elaborate as to occupy much time.

Superintendent. Contrast this scene with that in which Elijah took part on Mount Carmel.

School. One was idolatrous, cruel, terrible, the other pastoral, domestic, tender. Each a little in keeping with the character of the great men engaged, and each equally manifesting the power and tending to the glory of God.

Superintendent. Recall some impressive features connected with the familiar story of Naaman the leper.

School. The utter disregard for disease and pestilence, for rank and dignity. The over-ruling for good the capture of an innocent child. The important service rendered by a very weak instrument. The advantage of adherence to principle and religious convictions among strangers. The needless fear and alarm which comes of not entering into God's plans. The pride of a human heart. The simplicity of God's remedy. The real service of faithful servants. The advantage of obedience to God's word. The generosity and gratitude of a man in his right mind.

All sing.

C. M.

O Lord, our fathers oft have told,
In our attentive ears,
Thy wonders in their days performed,
And in more ancient years.

'Twas not their courage, nor their sword,
To them salvation gave;
'Twas not their number, nor their strength,
That did their country save;

But thy right hand, thy powerful arm,
Whose succor they implored;
Thy providence protected them,
Who thy great name adored.

As thee their God our fathers owned,
So thou art still our King;
O, therefore, as thou didst to them,
To us deliverance bring.

Saved.

BY MRS. MARY L. DICKINSON.

From the shame of our constant transgression,
 From evil of deed and of word,
 From the might of our haunting temptation,
 Saved by the love of our Lord.
 From the past overshadowed with error,
 The future o'ershadowed with dread,
 From the burdens we bear for our living,
 The sorrow we bear for our dead,
 From the tyrannous self that enslaves us,
 Heaping up shame for reward,
 The power that frees us and saves us
 Is the pitiful love of the Lord.
 Though lost in the wilderness journey,
 The sheep astray from the fold,
 The little ones faint by the way-side,
 His love will enfold and uphold.
 For the feeble folk, helpless and weary,
 Useless for work or for word,
 Ay, even for these is awaiting
 The wonderful love of the Lord.
 Saved from our worst and our lowest,
 Saved by his love and his might,
 From the deeps of our bitter abasement,
 To the joy of this heavenly height;
 Saved from our death and defilement,
 To life, with his life in accord;
 To tenderest trust and to service,
 Saved by the love of our Lord.

The Slide on Cherry Mountain.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

HARK! What was it the men working in a new house at the foot of a shaggy New Hampshire mountain heard one July morning, this past summer? Was it thunder? There had been, early that morning, a furious storm crashing among the lonely mountains, but just then, what was the strange, angry roar? The owner of the building rushed to the door and looked out. What a sight he beheld! An immense mass of rocks, earth, and trees, flying, whirling, crashing, roaring! A vast river of death rushing down from the mountain! A huge battering ram driving mercilessly at that very house!

"Get out of here!" shouted the owner of the house. "The whole mountain's coming down on us."

Out of the house they rushed, barely escaping with their lives, while through the house was driven that mass of destruction as if impelled by thousands of fiends. On the other side of the road was a man in the barn. He heard the rumble and felt the jar of the coming avalanche. He ran to the door, but the slide crushed the barn as if an egg-shell, and buried him in the cellar, from which he was taken bruised and mutilated. When this express train of destruction—its awful wheels the huge mountain boulders—halted in the valley below, what an area of unsightly ruin was spread before the eye! But how did it happen?

The crashing storm of the early morning had probably swelled a stream up near the summit of the mountain. The growing, rushing waters dislodged various boulders there and pushed them downward. Other rocks were swept along, trees uprooted, earth gullied out, and so a huge crashing plow, growing bigger and bigger, bigger and bigger, went driving down the mountain, drawing its deep furrow through forests, across ravines, finally grinding its way along the green fields of summer.

Ah, the avalanche! how it all starts in a very little trouble! Its end is terrible; its beginning is trivial. Is it not true of those catastrophes in the moral life which we so sadly deplore, that they start in little sources? The drunkenness that wrecks homes is an avalanche beginning in drops and tastes and sips. Some startling defalcation may begin in the theft of a penny, while some sin of unchastity finds its beginning in a single impure thought. If the New Hampshire farmer whose buildings the mountain-slide plowed under could have prevented the disaster, saving his buildings, the fair green fields, the murmuring forests, would he not gladly have done it?

He could have prevented it if he had been on the mountain-summit and had reined in those boulders starting off at such a gentle pace at first. O you who are on the mountain-tops of youth, at the sources of all growth, check evil in the very hour of its start. The wrong thought—hold it back, arresting it forever, lest it go out to grow into the avalanche bringing the darkness of death and the stillness of the grave.

Installation Day.

IN the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Emporia, Kansas, the Sunday-school year will hereafter begin with April, and the first Sabbath of that month will be "Installation Day." Instead of the usual morning sermon, a Sunday-school service will be held in the auditorium. With prayer and song and mutual covenant, the officers and teachers will thus publicly assume their duties. The pastor will conduct the Installation, and furnish certificates accordingly. The card which contains the certificate will likewise have on it the covenant assented to. This covenant was unanimously adopted by the teachers' meeting. The service is very simple, there being no attempt at ritualistic display. The workers in the school simply seek to draw nearer together for mutual help, and to emphasize the fact that the Sunday-school is an organic part of the Church, and not a sporadic society which is charitably permitted to meet in the lecture room. The first Installation was held this year. By a pleasing coincidence it fell on Easter Sunday. The church was bright with flowers. Seats were reserved for the Sunday-school in the central part of the crowded auditorium. The hymns used were common both to the "Hymnal" and the Sunday-school singing-book. The children were attentive and quiet, though they had just been in the Sunday-school.

The pastor and superintendent spoke briefly.

Then came the Installation. After that a collection was taken for the Sunday-School Union and Tract Society of our Church. The indications are very encouraging, and seem to point to the best year in the history of the school. For many years the superintendent has been the Hon. E. W. Cunningham, who, though a busy lawyer, finds time to attend the teachers' meeting.

How a Smoker Got a Home.

BY L. P. HUBBARD.

I began to chew at the age of twelve. A few years later I commenced smoking. The practice grew upon me till I was smoking a large portion of the time except when asleep. At length I united with the Church, and very soon abandoned the filthy habit of chewing tobacco. I still, however, enjoyed the cigar.

Just at this time I met a friend, who with a countenance beaming with love said, "It don't look well to see a member of the Church smoking." "You are right," said I, and taking the cigar from my mouth threw it into the gutter. That was the last cigar I ever smoked. I was emancipated from a slavery worse than Egyptian bondage.

I now deposited the money I had been so long squandering for tobacco in the Seamen's Bank for Savings. I will tell the boys what I did with it, that they may see how unwise and inexpedient it is to commence the expensive, demoralizing habit of smoking or chewing tobacco.

We had long lived in the city, but the annual visit of the children to their grandfather's made them long for a home among the green fields. I found a very pleasant place for sale. There were over two acres of land, with abundant shade and fruit-trees, a good garden, a fine view of Long Island Sound—near the academy, churches, and schools, and a convenient distance from New York. The cigar money was drawn upon to purchase the place, and it is mine.

I wish the boys who are tempted to smoke could see how the children enjoy their new home, as they watch the great steamers, and the vessels with their white sails as they course along the Sound. Sometimes over a hundred are seen at one view.

Just before or after a storm, we hear very distinctly the roar of old Ocean. It is then that we think of the perils of the sea, and realize the dangers to which the brave sailors are exposed. The children are also interested in the horse, cow, calf, and chickens. They enjoy their plays and sports on the green grass, which give them health and happiness.

My smoking was moderate compared with that of many. only six cigars a day at 6½ cents each, equal to \$186 50 per annum, which at 7 per cent. interest for fifty years, amounts to the small fortune of \$55,476 82. This has afforded means for the education of my children, with an appropriate allowance for benevolent objects.

Great as this saving has been, it is not to be com-

pared with improved health, a clear head and steady hand, at the age of over seventy-five years, and entire freedom from desire for tobacco in any form.

About Parents.

It is impossible to overrate the importance of parental help to Sunday-school work.

This help may be given in many ways, but if withheld thoughtlessly or deliberately, the mischief will be many-sided.

By sending their children to the schools, parents are tacitly pledged to aid the teachers; and they may be expected to do this without any special request, so far as cleanliness, punctuality, and requiring good conduct are concerned.

But there are some points to which it may be well to ask the attention of fathers and mothers most earnestly.

1. Parents should remember that the Sunday-school has an aim quite distinct from the day-school. In the latter, children can obtain a secular education, which may be better for them than a mint of money; but the Sunday-school is the place in which they are to be taught the truth of the Christian religion; in which an earnest effort will be put forth to bring them into personal direct fellowship with the best of all friends, the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

The object of the Sunday-school among children is precisely the same as the object of the Church generally in the world, namely: to bring souls into saving communion with God, to make the bad good, and the good better.

Surely there are few parents who will not sympathize with the teachers in their intense desire thus to bless, and enrich, and save the children.

There is a story of a magical stone which became whatever its possessor most ardently wished. If he were hungry, its hard gray surface became soft white bread; if he were weary, it stretched itself out into the blanket, to receive his tired body; if he were sick, it quickly melted into the healing medicine. What a treasure! But if by strong desire we could secure for our children what we would, who can doubt that such desire would not be limited to bread, or ease, or worldly wealth, or time? Parents who have been indifferent about their own salvation wish their children's safety; and it is most desirable that they should render help to our Sunday-schools in their effort to win the boys and girls for Christ and to his Church. This they may do by personal attendance at public worship, by dedicating themselves to God, by making the tone of the home Christian, by allowing no bad language to be used, by discouraging every thing that is not pure and correct in behavior, and by encouraging the singing and repetition of hymns learned at school, the recitation of texts and lessons, and all the favorable expressions of the children about good things, the sanctuary, and the school.

2. Parents should remember how much more time their children spend away from their Sunday-school than in it, and should themselves be watch-

ful over their moral and spiritual interests during the week. They should take care to know where the boys are after dark, and where and how the girls spend their evenings. The impression their children receive now will ABIDE—whether for good or bad depends very much on the fathers and mothers. Both in Christian families, and in many homes destitute of religion, it is felt to be a difficulty when the subject of amusement is under consideration. It is well when father or mother allow the children to attend entertainments of an instructive or pleasing kind, if one of them always goes with them. A father is often as agreeable and as much desired as a companion for his boys as boys of their own age would be. But it is certain that no parents should permit their sons and daughters to spend their week evenings in such places of amusement as are in violent contrast to the Sunday-school, or in which it is likely that the young people will learn lessons that will tend to undermine or destroy the better teaching of the Sabbath day.

3. Parents should remember, also, that the period in which the best work can be done for their children is very limited. It is not merely a question of Sundays—they are few—their hours devoted to teaching are soon gone; but the whole period of childhood is so very soon over. These precious youths will before long have lost their youth. These children of to-day will in a very few years be the fathers and mothers, the workers, the writers, the good or the bad of that near future.

No one knows how much depends on the parents and teachers of this very week. They may make or mar many beautiful lives. They may do much to cause joy about these children in years to come, or to wring the cry from agonized hearts about them, "O, that they could be children again."

4. Parents should remember that devotion now to the best interests of their children, and ready help given to their Sunday-school teachers, means a harvest of reward for themselves in after days.

Christian instruction makes sons and daughters respect the obligation of filial duties all through life; it trains the MAN to show the respect, the gratitude, the love which belonged to him as a CHILD. It makes such, when they have advanced in life, prospered in circumstances, grown in wisdom, and gained position, remember with affection the guides and friends of their youth. It opens their eyes to see more beauty in the wrinkled hands of an old mother than in the jeweled fingers of the daughter of fashion. It makes them feel the keenest delight in life in being able to minister to the comfort of those who spent years of watchful solicitude over their early days, and who strove to secure their highest good. It fills the chambers of memory with blessed thought; it makes the old school and the old sanctuary sacred spots to them forever; and the parents' table, the parents' house, and the parents' voice, never to be forgotten. Sons and daughters have a rich heritage when all their recollections of home, and father, and mother, have connection with godly teaching and attractive religion.

And parents who lovingly set themselves to train the spirits of their children aright, set themselves to the noblest work on earth. It is far better to make a good man than a great statesman; and they who so influence youthful minds as to make them Christian will not only bless those minds, but leave a precious legacy to posterity, and do a work that will outlive all the thrones on earth, and all the stars of the firmament.—*Wesleyan Methodist Sunday-School Magazine.*

Book Notices.

The Life of George Eliot. By J. W. Cross. New York: Harper & Brothers. In these three volumes we have the life of a great woman—an autobiography written without autobiographical intention. Mr. Cross, her husband, has with praiseworthy skill and delicacy arranged the letters and private journal of his gifted wife into a continuous narrative, which has the charm of being a story told by herself. Mr. Cross has too often drawn his pen through passages which would be eagerly sought by admirers of this famous woman. One wishes, for example, that he could read the unedited allusions of George Eliot to the American Civil War; the grounds by which she defended before the bar of her own conscience her relations to Mr. Lewes, and her real thought at the last concerning the Gospel in which she so implicitly believed before beginning the translation of Strauss, and before the surrender of herself, soul and body, in idolatrous devotion to her gifted and cultivated but self-willed companion. Marion Evans was a strong character, a woman full of tenderness and susceptibility. She enjoyed and suffered intensely. She was a student of human nature who knew human nature without study. She was shrinking, sympathetic, and womanly. She awes you by her power, and by her frank, affectionate, and impulsive nature wins your sympathy and love. Her life, by Mr. Cross, is a dangerous book to put into the hands of young people, and of those whose minds are not at rest concerning the character and work of Jesus Christ.

A Companion to the Revised Old Testament. By Talbot W. Chambers. New York: Funk & Wagnalls. Dr. Chambers is one of the American Committee of Revision, and therefore has abundant reason for knowing of what he writes. Every one who wishes to have a concise yet complete and authentic account of the Revised Old Testament should have a copy of this book. It will very materially assist the reader to an intelligent examination of the results of the revisers' work.

Democratic Government. A Study of Politics. By Albert Stickney. New York: Harper & Brothers. With a profound veneration for the framers of our government and a patriotic devotion to its principles, the author sees and points out certain dangers which exist, and proposes remedies for them. He maintains that in some respects our government is not truly democratic. "In form we have responsibility to the people. In fact we have responsibility to the election machine." The book is well worth the study of all who are interested in political science.

A Railroad Waif. By Mrs. C. B. Sargent. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. A street arab of Cincinnati finds his way to a farm in the country, and notwithstanding some backslidings, is led from vice to right ways.

Delivered from Afar; or, Hopes Realized in Dakota. By Ralph Roberts. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. This is a story of real life, not in the Middle Ages, but of to-day. Opening in a railroad-office in New York, the scene is soon shifted to a Dakota prairie; and the book gives life-like pictures of a colonist's experience in the new North-west. No person could possibly have written it without a personal knowledge of its events, and not even then without an observing eye and a ready pen. It will interest every reader, and may lead some to follow its hero's example, and seek the realization of their own hopes in Dakota.

General Gordon, the Christian Hero. By the author of "Our Queen," "New World Heroes," etc. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. This is the story of a wonderful life and is as captivating as a romance. The life of this Christian soldier is worthy of being placed by the side of the biography of Captain Headley Vicers, of Crimean fame, or of Sir Henry Havelock, the hero of India. Faithful to country and faithful to God was characteristic of them all; but in Gordon's life there is more of the romantic and the startling than is to be found in the lives of the others. Not only England, but the whole Christian world, mourns his death.

The History of the Christian Church during the Middle Ages, with a Summary of the Reformation. Centuries XI to XVI. By Philip Smith, B.A. New York: Harper & Brothers. This is Part II of the Student's Ecclesiastical History, the first part of which was published several years ago. It is an admirable history of the mediæval Church, giving an account of the supremacy of the papacy and of its degradation; its subsequent struggles with schism; the various councils of the Church; the monks and friars; scholastic theology; sects and heresies; and the great Reformation. The volume is well illustrated. We commend it and the former volume to our Sunday-school teachers as a useful addition to their library.

From the Golden Gate to the Golden Horn. A Narrative of Travel and Adventure. By Henry Frederic Reddall. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. Two boys, accompanied by their father, start on a trip around the world. Their voyage begins at San Francisco, and takes them across the Pacific Ocean. They visit China, Japan, Australia, India, Arabia, and the Mediterranean lands. Many interesting incidents take place, and much knowledge is gained. Every young person who takes up this book, brimful of pictures, will read it to the end and be profited by it.

The Gospel in all Lands. This monthly periodical, an illustrated quarto of 48 pages, is now issued by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is packed full of facts bearing on the great missionary work of the Church, just the facts needed for missionary concerts. The Rev. Eugene R. Smith, who has been its editor for years past, retains his position under the new management. *The Missionary World* (8 pages) and *The Little Missionary* (4 pages) are made up of matter abridged from the larger periodical, and are intended especially for Sunday-schools. They are illustrated and published monthly.

Tales from Many Sources. Vol. II. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co. The second volume of this interesting series contains, "My Paris Masters," by Author of "Reata;" "Monflon," by Ouida; "Beauchamp & Co.," by Mrs. Herbert Martin; "The Knightsbridge Mystery," by Charles Reade; "Archdeacon Holden's

Tribulations," from the "Cornhill Magazine;" "Michel Lorio's Cross," by Hesba Stretton; "In Durance Vile," by The Duchess.

Franklin Square Library. New York: Harper & Brothers. Of the recent issues of this library, the following are among the most important: George Eliot's *Life*, 3 vols, (Nos. 449, 450, 451); *The Russians at the Gates of Herat*, with three maps and twenty-eight illustrations. By Charles Marvin, (No. 463); *Russia under the Tsars.* By Stepniak. With Portrait (No. 466); *Victor Hugo and His Time.* By Alfred Barbou. With over 120 illustrations. (No. 470); *The Revised Version of the Old Testament*, 4 vols. (Nos. 472, 474, 476, 478.)

The Adventures of Jimmy Brown. Written by Himself, and edited by W. L. Alden. New York: Harper & Brothers. There is no doubt about the interest of this series of short stories, for the average boy will sit up all night to read them. And upon the whole, we cannot object to them on moral grounds. Jimmy does not lack in respect for his parents, as is the trouble with most young heroes in the "bad boy" books, but is simply a boy overrunning with spirits and, like most boys, heedless of consequences. This book will not answer for the Sunday-school, but may safely be read in a well-ordered home.

The Sefton Boys. By C. E. Irvine. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. A short story of life among the lower classes in England, inculcating in its several chapters the lessons of the clauses, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest," etc., in Phil. 4. 8.

Fathoms Deep; or, Courtenay's Choice. By Catherine Shaw. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. A story of moderate merit, drawn out rather longer than is necessary, but not deficient in interest. Its scene is laid in England, and some of its social usages are of English rather than American life.

Carlourie; or, Among Lothian Folk. By Annie S. Swan. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. A well-written and interesting story of life in the lowlands, presenting some of the noblest features of the strong Scottish character. The Scottish dialect of most of its conversations may detract a little from the enjoyment of the book by younger people, but will add to it for those who are familiar with the tongue of Burns.

At the Red Glove. New York: Harper & Brothers. The scene of this story is laid in southern France, and some of its characters are well drawn. It is not suited, however, for the Sunday-school library.

Virginia Cookery Book. Compiled by Mary Stuart Smith. New York: Harper & Brothers. Editors—that is, of the masculine order—are not supposed to have any practical knowledge of the processes of cooking, though deeply interested in the results. Virginia hospitality and Virginia cookery have long been famous, and though no book can give a recipe for the hospitality, this volume lets us into some of the secrets of the cookery.

Hand-book of the United Brethren in Christ. By E. L. Shuey, A.M. Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House. A convenient little book for reference, and for the use of those who desire to know the history and usages of one of our evangelical and growing Churches, closely allied to Methodism in its origin and polity.

Norman and Elsie; or, Two Little Prisoners. By Emily Brodie. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. The many English stories republished by this house will give to the Sunday-school children of America quite extensive knowledge of social customs in "the

old country." This story is of fair literary merit, but hardly valuable enough to require reprinting.

Return, O Shulamite! and Other Sermons Preached in 1884. By C. H. Spurgeon, of London. New York: Carter & Brothers. Those who have never heard the great preacher may, from reading these sermons, form some idea of his direct, pointed, and earnest method of preaching; and those who have heard him can readily place him before them in their minds, and can easily imagine that they hear his clear, ringing voice, and feel the wondrous magnetism of his presence. These sermons furnish strong, nourishing food for hungry souls.

The Children's Portion. By Alexander M'Leod, D.D. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Dr. M'Leod here gives us specimens of the brief talks he is in the habit of giving every Sunday to the children in his congregation. We cordially commend the volume to two classes: 1. To the children, who will find it interesting; and, 2. To pastors and teachers who want to learn how to talk to children. The book will show them by example.

Talks with Young Men. By J. Thain Davidson, D.D. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. Whoever will take the trouble to read the table of contents of this book of "talks," will notice that it discusses important subjects under striking titles. And if he opens the book to see what is said about some one of the topics, he will find a sparkling style and very sensible matter, which will keep him interested until he has read the book through. We heartily recommend these lectures, for they contain what every young man should know.

Communion Memories. The Record of some Sacramental Sundays. With Meditations, Addresses, and Prayers for the Lord's Table. Including an Introduction and Historical Appendix. By J. R. Macduff, D.D. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. This is a book of high devotional character, and well adapted for reading preparatory to partaking of the Lord's Supper. While it will be of very special interest to Presbyterians, and more particularly to Scotch Presbyterians, it will be found profitable to every pious heart of every name. It is a book for the Church catholic.

Robert Graham's Promise. By the author of the "Win and Wear Series." New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. This is a story of New England academy life; not quite to New England what "Tom Brown's School Days" is to Old England, yet a readable and enjoyable book. Robert Graham is a boy of the ordinary type, neither worse nor better than others, whose ups and downs at school are well related. The characters of the principal, Dr. Trotter, and Rob's humble friend, the stage-driver, to whom he made "the promise" of the title, are drawn with skill.

Anecdotes Illustrative of New Testament Texts. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. Every teacher finds a good illustration useful in the class. It will attract attention, help to make the point clear, and often touch the conscience. Here is a book which will help him to find good illustrations on lessons in the New Testament.

Pindar: The Olympian and Pythian Odes. With an Introductory Essay, Notes, and Indexes. By Basil L. Gildersleeve, Professor of Greek in the Johns Hopkins University. New York: Harper & Brothers. An edition prepared for the use of schools and colleges.

The Power and Authority of School Officers and Teachers in the Management and Government of Public School, and over Pupils out of School, as Determined by the Courts of the Several States. By a Member of the

Massachusetts Bar. New York: Harper & Brothers. A small book for such an extensive title, but carefully prepared, after close study of the laws in the various states, and valuable to secular teachers.

Pulpit and Easel. By Mary B. Sleight. New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co. Two boys, school-mates and play-mates, choose their aims in life. One wants to be an artist, the other is wanted to be an artist by his parents. The appointed artist against his parents' desire becomes a preacher, for which calling he was born; the born artist yields to the persuasion of friends and a mistaken conviction of duty, and also tries to make of himself a preacher, but fails, and in the end serves God in his own vocation as a painter. The story of cross-purposes, but final success, is well wrought out, and quite interesting. A good library book for boys.

We have received from the National Temperance Society and Publishing House, New York, two excellent pamphlets of Blackboard Temperance Lessons, Nos. 1 and 2, by Mrs. W. F. Crafts, and a Christmas Temperance Concert exercise, entitled *Our Motto*, by T. R. Thompson, well adapted for the public meeting of a Band of Hope, or Sunday-school Temperance Society.

Diet for the Sick. A Treatise on the Values of Foods, their Application to Special Conditions of Health and Disease, and on the Best Methods of their Preparation. By Mrs. Mary F. Henderson. New York: Harper & Brothers. There are times when almost every family finds the need of just such a book as this, which will guide in the selection, preparation, and "serving up" of suitable and tasty dishes for the sick and the convalescent.

Without a Home. By E. P. Roe. With Illustrations by H. M'Vickar. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co. This story is like most of the writings of its author, full of interest, strong in its features of character, and earnest in its moral purpose. It is a sad story, but it may do much good, if through it the public may be awakened to realize the wrongs of shop-girls in the great cities. We know from personal inquiry the truth of the statement in this story, that in most large stores the sales-women are not permitted to sit down a moment during their entire day's service at the counters.

The Handy Series. New York: Harper & Brothers. Another attempt to supply the hunger of this age for fictitious literature; a weekly series of paper-covered stories, duodecimos in size and neat in appearance, which will doubtless find multitudinous readers. There have already been published, "That Terrible Man," "Society in London," "Mignon; or, Bootles' Baby," "Louisa," "John Needham's Double," "Home Letters," by D'Israeli, "Mr. Butler's Ward," and others. A few good stories are beneficial, but the prevailing fashion of reading a hundred novels to one book of fact is evil, and only evil, in its influence.

The Summer and its Diseases. By James C. Wilson, M.D. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son, & Co. As far as we have examined them, the books of the series of "American Health Primers" are not only convenient in shape and elegant in looks, but are excellent and helpful in their contents. If every body could have obtained this book before the opening of the summer, and not only read it, which would have been easy, for it is quite interesting, but, what is of more importance and harder to do, followed its suggestions, there would have been less need of the doctors during this season. Fifty cents is cheap enough, if it will save the expense of physician and physic.

CLASS RECORD FOR SEPTEMBER, 1885.

	Sept. 6.	Sept. 13.	Sept. 20.	Sept. 27.
Weather				
Teacher.				
PUPILS.				

Whisper Songs for September.

(Tune, "When He Cometh.")

TENTH LESSON.

Thou art Conqueror ! Thou art Conqueror !
 O Jesus, our Saviour.
 We will love thee, we will love thee,
 And follow thee home.—*Cho.*

ELEVENTH LESSON.

Blessed Jesus ! blessed Jesus !
 The children may know thee ;
 Thou wilt keep them, thou wilt keep them,
 And gather them home.—*Cho.*

TWELFTH LESSON.

Little children, little children,
 May speak for their Saviour,
 Words of wisdom, words of wisdom,
 To point wanderers home.—*Cho.*

LESSONS FOR 1885.

Third Quarter.

- July 5. REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES. 1 Kings 12. 6-17.
 12. IDOLATRY ESTABLISHED. 1 Kings 12. 25-33.
 19. OMRI AND AHAB. 1 Kings 16. 23-34.
 26. ELIJAH THE TISHBITE. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.
 Aug. 2. ELIJAH MEETING AHAB. 1 Kings 18. 1-18.
 9. THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. 1 Kings 18. 19-29.
 16. THE PROPHET OF THE LORD. 1 Kings 18. 30-46.
 23. ELIJAH AT HOREB. 1 Kings 19. 1-18.
 30. THE STORY OF NABOTH. 1 Kings 21. 4-19.

- Sept. 6. Elijah Translated. 2 Kings 2. 1-15.
 13. The Shunammite's Son. 2 Kings 4. 18-37.
 20. Naaman the Syrian. 2 Kings 5. 1-16.
 27. Third Quarterly Review.

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